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RED AX, THE INDIAN GIANT;

OR,

THE RIVER STOCKADE.

A TALE OF BORDER LIFE.

BY PAUL BIBBS.

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RED AX, THE INDIAN GIANT.

OR,

THE RIVER STOCKADE.

CHAPTER I.

THE PRICE OF A SCALP.

It was sunset, or near it, on the 14th day of October, 18—. Just as the great orb sunk below the horizon, a canoe shot out from the right bank of the St. Peter's, headed directly for the opposite shore.

This canoe—formed from birchen-bark, and highly ornamented—contained two persons. He occupying the bow, and using the paddle, was an Indian—his companion a white.

The former was somewhere in the neighborhood of twenty five years of age, tall and well built, and garbed in full Ojibwah costume. He handled the paddle like the adept he was, and it was a beautiful sight to observe the play of his muscles as he propelled the craft forward.

His companion was somewhat his senior. His physiognomy was that of either a Frenchman or a Spaniard, for it would have puzzled even an expert physiognomist to have determined which. His name—Salvarez—would seem to indicate that he was the latter, although he spoke French with remarkable fluency. He was dressed in a dirty suit of brown velveteen, moccasins, and a fur cap. His arms consisted of a rifle, a brace of pistols, a stiletto and a hatchet, giving him an appearance at once formidable and savage. As they crossed the river he squatted down in the stern of the canoe, and kept a constant look-out toward the shore for which they were heading.

At length the land was reached. Springing ashore, paddle in hand, the Indian drew the canoe high up on the bank. Salvarez then debarked, and the craft was next concealed in a clump of willows.

'Well, Pou-loup, which way now?"

The young Indian did not speak, but raising his hand, pointed toward the south-west.

Salvarez answered by a nod of his head, and shouldering his rifle, followed after his companion, who had commenced to strike off into the forest.

Their destination proved to be but a short distance from the river—not over three-fourths of a mile. Arriving at the margin of a small clearing, the Indian turned to his companion, and motioned him to be seated.

"The chief has not yet arrived," he said, speaking in the French tongue. "It is yet early."

Seating themselves, the Indian took from a pouch hanging at his side a red-stone pipe, which, charging with kini-ki-nik, he lit, and commenced puffing away. Salvarez imitated his example by producing from his pocket a pipe made from a hollowed-out butternut and piece of cane. This was filled with tobacco, and a moment later he was regaling himself after the fashion of his companion.

By the time their pipes were exhausted it was dark.

"The chief is late," said Salvarez, knocking the ashes from his pipe, and restoring it to his pocket.

But scarcely had he spoken when a sound was heard, and the next moment some half a dozen savages appeared in the opening. Here they came to a halt; and Pou-loup, without rising from his seat, called out a few words in Ojibwah, the result of which was, the band again advanced, and seated themselves close to the two who had been awaiting them.

"Is the Long-knife—Salvarez—here?" asked one of the savages. "It is dark—I can not see him."

"He is," answered Salvarez. "The Long-knife is not a man who breaks his word." He spoke in French.

On hearing this, the savage gave vent to a grunt of satisfaction.

"It is well, brother," said the one who had spoken before. "The words of the pale-face are noble. He is the red-man's friend. Have I spoken the truth?"

"You have, chief of the Ojibwahs, and mightiest of your nation!" answered Salvarez. "We are here to night for a common cause. Red-Ax, the outlawed chief, the serpent of

his nation, is *your* enemy—he is *mine*. What did he do? Waouga! You cry, he is a traitor! For many moons the Ojibwahs and the Sioux have warred with each other, and the Ojibwahs hate them as they do the serpent."

"Ugh! It is true!" ejaculated the savages.

"And," continued he, "what did the serpent-tongued Ojibwah do? You all know. He took to his lodge a squaw of the Sioux chief, so that she could poison the corn of the Ojibwahs, and deliver their children into the hands of her people. Ojibwahs! I have spoken."

The effect of this harangue upon the savages was apparent. Vengeful murmurs went the round of the circle.

"The chief is cunning," said one of the savages, after the excitement had somewhat subsided. "The Ojibwahs can not hurt him."

"No," said another, "only our pale-face brother can harm him."

For some moments after, silence was observed.

"I understand you," said Salvarez, at last. "You wish me to bring you the scalp of Red-Ax. I can, and will do it. As you have said, the chief is cunning. His hand is strong, and I may fail. If I succeed, what is to be my reward?"

"Name what you wish," said one of the savages. "If you ask for a squaw, you shall have the handsomest in our tribe. The scalp of Red-Ax is worth a dozen squaws."

"No, it is not a squaw I wish," replied Salvarez.

"It is money, perhaps?" was suggested.

"You have guessed rightly," replied Salvarez. "It is money."

"How much?"

"A hundred dollars."

The savages, after hearing this reply, were for a few moments silent. Finally, after a short discussion among themselves, the answer was:

"The sum is large, and the Ojibwahs are poor; but, for all that, the Long-knife shall have it."

The bargain being thus brought to a satisfactory conclusion, the savages rose to their feet, and silently took their departure; while Salvarez, guided by Pou-loup, set about returning to St. John—the village whence he had come.

CHAPTER II.

A JEALOUS RECLUSE

THE village of St. John stood on the right bank of the Minnesota—or St. Peter's—about one hundred miles above its junction with the Mississippi. It contained some two hundred inhabitants, most of them engaged in agriculture and stock-raising; the remainder were the disciples of Nimrod, and depended upon their rifles for a subsistence.

Toward the close of the afternoon succeeding the events narrated in the last chapter, the look-out on the parapet of the fort descried a train of wagons making its way slowly toward the settlement. When first beheld, it was some miles away, but, as the prairie was smooth, it was likely to arrive at the settlement about sundown.

The news being conveyed to the settlers, preparations were at once commenced for the receival of the caravan—owned by traders, no doubt, from St. Paul. The visit of a trading company to an out-of-the-way settlement is an occurrence of importance, and always a welcome one. The fort was cleared of all unnecessary incumbrances, and all was then in readiness for the arrival.

They were not kept long in waiting. Just as the sun touched the horizon the foremost wagon entered the clearing, followed closely by the others. The long-haired teamsters arranged these in a circle, the horses were then unhitched and picketed on the prairie to graze. The traders themselves—some thirty in number—rode on horseback. Most of them were well known to the settlers of St. John, and right welcome was the greeting that awaited them.

Among the traders who arrived that afternoon was a young man, an entire stranger to one and all of the settlers who were assembled there. He was in the neighborhood of twenty-five years of age, of medium size and stature, dark-eyed and complexioned, with a profusion of dark curly hair. He was neatly attired, and armed with a rifle, knife and a

brace of Colt revolvers. His name, it was subsequently learned, was Henry Montbleu. He was an American, wealthy, and had joined the traders for sake of adventure, not for profit. He had invested a few hundreds in such goods as find a ready sale among the Indians, all of which were stored away in one of the wagons.

After regaling themselves with a hearty supper, the traders prepared to enjoy the evening with a regular backwoods dance. A room in the fort which was large enough for the affair was got in readiness, by placing in it a large table, upon which had been put a couple of rude chairs. This arrangement was of course intended for the convenience of the orchestra, which consisted of two violins.

Presently the dance commenced, and not feeling disposed to join the throng, Henry Montbleu wandered away down to the river-bank. Seating himself, he was soon lost in contemplation of the magnificent surroundings. He remained there until it was quite dark, then proceeded at once toward the fort. Near the stockade he met one of the traders, who prevailed upon him to join in the festivities; and together they entered the ball-room.

"Do you dance, Mr. Montbleu?" queried the trader.

The answer was in the affirmative.

"All right, then; I will introduce you to a partner."

Grasping the young man by the arm, the trader led him to where was seated, on a bench, a young and exquisitely beautiful girl—Maud Rockville. The introduction being over, she was asked if she was disengaged. She was; and the next moment they were circling round and round the room. It was plainly evident that the meeting between these two was no less pleasing to one than the other, for the truth was, that they remained in each other's company the whole of the evening.

Every beauty has her admirers, even in a backwoods settlement. Among the observers of the fact concerning Henry Montbleu and his partner was a man well known to the settlers, by the name of Mack Rollins. He was somewhat over thirty years of age, dark-haired and complexioned, with features which, though inclined to be somewhat handsome, were stamped with a look of pitiless maliciousness.

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Rollins did not dwell in the settlement, but had built him a cabin some distance up the river, in a deep ravine, and he lived there. Being a reckless, bullying-dispositioned man, none of the settlers ever visited him, a fact with which, rumor said, he was more pleased than angry. Nevertheless, he was often to be found within the village, though no one was ever shrewd enough to discover what took him there. He supported himself with his rifle, and was reputed to be one of the best shots to be found in the country.

The ball ended, Rollins found himself outside, along with a number of others. Then, leaning against the stockade, he waited until the crowd had dispersed. He then shouldered his rifle, and was about to follow their example, when his eye caught sight of a figure slowly making its way toward the fort. The moon was shining in an unclouded sky, and he was enabled to make out who the figure was, on the instant.

"Good!" he exclaimed. "It is Old Kini-ki-nik."

The figure approaching the fort was that of an Indian. He was an extremely old fellow, and made the fort his home, preferring the society of the whites to his own people. He was an adept at manufacturing Indian tobacco, and that made by his hands was said to be more finely flavored than any other, but for which fact no one knew how to assign any reason. Hence he was known by the *sobriquet* of Old Kini-ki-nik.

Coming suddenly upon Rollins, he started, and gave vent to a low "Ugh!"

"Don't be scared, old fellow," said Rollins. "Come here."

The Indian approached him.

"Ugh! Rollins!"

"Yes. You are the very one I've been waiting for."

The Indian grunted; and drawing him a short distance away from the stockade, in order that his words might not be heard by any one, Rollins said:

"Kini-ki-nik, how long are these traders going to stay in St. John?"

"Oh, 'bout a week, I heard."

"A week!" ejaculated Rollins. "The devil! It will give that fellow a good chance to get into her good graces, by that time."

"Who you talk about?" asked the Indian.

"No one. Listen, Kini-ki-nik. You were here this afternoon when the traders arrived, I think?"

The old fellow nodded his head.

"Well, did you observe among the number any one you had never seen before—a young man, with black curly hair?"

"Ugh! Yes, I saw him."

"Good. Listen, I have a job for you. I want you to watch this fellow, for, you know, I can't always be here. I want you to watch and see if he ever visits Maud Rockville—you know her, Kini-ki-nik: or if you ever see him with her at all, you must let me know. Do you understand?"

"Ugh! Yes. It shall be as you wish."

"Very well. I shall expect you to keep your promise."

With these words, Rollins left his companion to himself. Crossing the clearing, he entered the forest and walked forward at a brisk pace. A walk of about four miles brought him to the base of a high hill, which he set about ascending at once. Reaching the summit, he descended the side opposite to the one he had ascended. The hill was thickly wooded, and when about half-way down it he entered a very deep ravine, abounding on either side with huge rocks and clumps of bushes, but nothing which could aspire to the dignity of a tree.

Half a mile from the opening of the ravine stood a cabin, of small size, but neatly built. This belonged to Rollins, and was his home. A faint light was gleaming through the window, and as, with silent footsteps, Rollins approached it, he looked through to the interior. Feeling satisfied at what he saw, he approached the door, opened it, and entered the cabin. Seated at the further end of the room, on a low stool, was a medium-sized, rather handsome-looking Indian woman. She was neatly attired, in a costume worn by pioneer women, her Indian garb having been laid aside. The woman was Rollins' wife, he having met her some few years before, and taken a violent fancy for her. Though the woman professed from the first a hatred for the man, she was nevertheless induced by her father to marry him. The cunning savage knew that, some time or other, her knowledge of Rollins' af-

fairs could be turned to advantage, and in this he afterward proved correct.

On entering the cabin, Rollins did not speak, but, doffing his cap and placing his rifle in a corner, he seated himself, his back being turned toward his Indian wife. Could he have seen the expression which came from the pair of eyes resting upon his movements, he would have been more upon his guard. But, she never having given him any cause to suspicion her, he ever felt quite easy in her presence, a thing which he afterward had cause to regret.

CHAPTER III.

RED-AX.

On the same evening that the events narrated in the last chapter occurred, an Indian, almost colossal in his proportions, was seated at the summit of a high cliff overhanging the St. Peter's, and some few miles above the settlement. He was considerably past forty years of age, and habited in full Ojibwah costume. He was armed with a huge bow, and hanging at his belt was the weapon from which he derived his name—Red-Ax.

Many a settler and trapper along the St. Peter's knew the history of that ax—for it was a terrible one. A year or two before the commencement of our story, this Indian dwelt, with his Indian wife, far to the north of the St. Peter's, along the banks of the Red River of the North. Constantly at war with his own tribe, and fearing for the safety of his wife more than for his own, the outlawed chief resolved to leave for the south. He did so, and settled along the banks of the St. Peter's. But even here the vengeance of the Ojibwahs reached him, and he was constantly in as much danger as he had been before.

As we have said, the chief was seated at the summit of a cliff. He was eagerly scanning the river far below, with an uneasy, troubled expression.

"Ugh! She is late," he said, at last.

The words spoken by the chief had hardly left his lips when a sound, resembling the dip of a paddle, reached his ears. He listened intently. Every moment the sound grew nearer.

"Good!" exclaimed the Indian, at length. "It is Waunona. Red-Ax knows the sound of the paddle well."

He rose to his feet, and at once commenced to descend the cliff, by a path well known to him, to the river's bank. His movements were hasty, for he wished to reach the stream before the canoe should pass the cliff.

Suddenly, when he was about half-way down, the ears of the chief were assailed by a shriek, which echoed again and again through the woods, and brought him who heard it to a sudden standstill. He listened intently, and as he did so a shade of anxiety crossed his features.

"Was it Waunona?" he asked himself. "It was the voice of a squaw."

He listened for a few seconds longer; then, hearing nothing save the warblings of a robin in a tree near by, he again commenced the descent of the acclivity. Reaching the bank of the river a few seconds later, he anxiously gazed, first up, then down the stream. But nothing satisfactory met his scrutiny. His face now wore a more somber expression than ever.

"Where is Waunona?" he muttered. "It was her paddle I heard—the ears of Red-Ax are true, and will not deceive him."

Stepping to the extreme edge of the water, he knelt down and applied his ear to the surface. Water being a good conveyer of sound, the chief knew that if the canoe had passed the cliff, it could not be very far away, and that it could be thus heard. But no. He was again doomed to disappointment; and, rising to his feet, he sunk back, gloomily, against the bank. Folding his arms, he remained in this situation for some moments, holding communion with his own thoughts.

Finally, his face assumed a somewhat brighter aspect, and leaving the spot against which he had been resting, he commenced to direct his course up the river, and with a careful

ness that proclaimed he had cause for apprehending danger. Though his every movement was careful, free from the least noise whatever, his progress was rapid; and he soon had the satisfaction of coming in sight of a slight bend in the river, that lay a short distance above the cliff. Here, being quite close to the river's bank, he halted; and ascertaining that no foe was lurking in the vicinity, he rose to an upright position, and directed his gaze across the river. Growing in thick profusion along the shore, and extending out into the stream for some distance, was a stretch of rushes; and the eyes of the chief had no sooner lit upon these than a long, dark object, half concealed by them, arrested his attention on the instant. At first, however, he did not attach any importance to it, supposing it to be nothing more than a drifting log which had become fastened there, but as he kept his eyes riveted upon it, the gleam of intelligence which crossed him showed that he had changed his opinion.

"Ugh!" he muttered. "It is a canoe. Red-Ax must cross over, but the eyes of the Ojibwahs are sharp, and it may be dangerous."

The Indian crept to the edge of the water, and, after a quick glance up and down the stream, entered it. He swam beneath the surface until he could retain his breath no longer, when he rose above the water. But it was for an instant only, and then he disappeared again.

When he again appeared, he was not over a dozen feet from the bank, and in the midst of the rushes, for which he had directed his course. In a crouching attitude, he waded up the stream, and until he was so near the canoe which had attracted his attention that it needed but the stretching forth of his hand for him to touch it.

The Indian executed this movement, drew the craft toward him, and gazed into it. Lying in a heap in the bottom was the form of a squaw—dead. An arrow had entered her side, just beneath the left arm, and the unerring shaft had cleft her heart.

Stoic as the Indian was, the sight was enough to cause him to start back, and, with a deep groan, to utter the name, "Waunona!"

For a few moments he stood there, with a mien far more

than terrible in its aspect; then he again grasped hold of the canoe, and dragged it with his giant strength toward the shore. Here, relieving the craft of its burden, he laid the dead body of his wife down upon the grass-covered bank, seated himself beside her, and buried his face in his hands.

"Waunona!" he groaned. "She is dead, and I, her chief, am living. Yes, living, for the hand of the great Manitou will spare me to avenge her. Avenge her! Yes, terribly avenge her! These are the days of autumn. The grain of the pale-face is opened, and the leaves of the forest are turned yellow, but, before the sun of another spring shall have chased the snow from the hills, Red-Ax, the Avenger, shall be satisfied!"

He rose to his feet, and at the same instant a slight rustling of the bushes back of him reached his ears. He glanced back, and just as he did so, a tomahawk flew past his head, and buried itself in the bank at his feet. Not quicker is the lightning than was the spring of the chief toward the bushes, for it was from there the weapon had been hurled. Pressing them aside with his iron arm, he gazed before him. Crouching low to the earth was the form of a savage, who, as the chief endeavored to grasp him, essayed to escape by rolling over until beyond reach, then making for the forest. But Red-Ax was as quick as he, and in less than a dozen seconds the cunning savage was in his power.

"Follow me!" commanded the chief. "You can not escape, for my tomahawk cleaves through the air faster than you."

With a fierce scowl upon his face, the captive did as he was bid. He was led back to the bank of the river, and to a few feet from where was resting the body of the dead woman. Pointing to it, Red-Ax said to the captive in a stern tone:

"What knows the Ojibwah serpent, the killer of squaws, of this?"

"Chayuga knows nothing of it," was the Indian's reply.

Red-Ax did not immediately answer, but approaching the dead body, he drew forth the fatal arrow, approached the captive, and compared it with those in the quiver at his back.

"See!" he said, holding before the eyes of the savage the fatal arrow, and one taken from the quiver. "These are alike. Does the serpent deny now that the arrow which struck down the squaw is his?"

The captive did not reply, for the evidence of his guilt was too decisive.

"H'sh-sh-sh!" hissed Red-Ax, hurling the missiles to the earth. "Coward! Why did the serpent not raise the scalp of the squaw?"

"Chayuga does not seek the scalp of women," was the reply.

"No, but their lives. Coward! Serpent! Dog! Die you shall, and close to the body of your victim!"

With these words the chief whipped from his belt his ax; and with one powerful blow, it descended upon the skull of his unflinching captive, cleaving him almost in twain.

But while the blood upon the weapon was yet warm, the chief commenced to upturn the sods, in order to prepare a resting-place for the body of his departed one. This done, he laid her carefully in it, filled in the dirt, and replaced the torn-up sods. Then he gave one deep sigh of grief, and strode hastily away into the forest.

CHAPTER IV.

PURSUED.

EARLY on the morning succeeding his arrival in St. John, young Montbleu, rifle in hand, sallied forth from the fort, and took his course toward the river. Being something of a sportsman, he had risen early, and was bound for the forest, in hopes of obtaining a shot or so at whatever game should chance to cross his path.

On reaching the river, he found a canoe in readiness, and placing his rifle inside, he entered himself, and pushed off from the shore.

After dropping down the stream for some distance, he gave

a sudden twist to his paddle, which served to head the craft directly toward the left bank. A few strokes of the paddle, the craft touched the shore, and the young man sprung ashore. He drew the vessel high enough up to be out of reach of the water, but he did not attempt to conceal it, being quite unused to matters of this kind.

He now shouldered his rifle, and struck directly into the forest, determined to slay whatever he met with, providing i did not happen to have the advantage of being human.

"Six weeks on the prairie," he said to himself, "and yet I have met with nothing fiercer than a buffalo. Verily, I am beginning to think that those desperate stories I have so often heard from the traders were only intended for the occasion, they knowing how credulous we city-raised fellows are. Halloo! What was that, I wonder?"

The exclamation was caused by a sound which came from a short distance behind him, but what caused it, the inexperienced ear of the young man was quite unable to detect. However, he cocked his rifle, and began to closely scrutinize the bushes in every direction. But being unable to catch a glimpse of any thing having any motion to it, he came to the conclusion that the noise had been made by a rabbit or some other small quadruped. Accordingly, he shouldered his rifle, and again resumed his course.

But he had not proceeded far, when the noise which had attracted his attention before, did so now, but this time it was far louder than before. It sounded now as if some huge animal was trying to make its way through a dense patch of brushwood; and the fact forcing itself upon the mind of the young man that a chance had now come for him to use his rifle, he turned hastily around, and began to carefully mak his way toward the quarter whence proceeded the sound.

The noise came from a dense thicket, some few rods away, and looked to be, from where his eye had first fallen upon it, impenetrable. But as he continued to near it, this illusion gradually vanished, and at length he was able to clearly make out the interstices between the trees.

Finding the noise did not decrease any, and being unable to discover the author of it from where he stood, he gradually drew near to the thicket, and peered into the darkness

beyond. In a few moments his eyes accommodated themselves to the light—or darkness—of the thicket, and he was able to make out the outlines of a dark and shaggy animal.

"Good!" he exclaimed; "it is a bear!"

A short distance in the thicket, and right where the bear was standing, were growing a few bushes, loaded with some species of red berries. The creature was devouring these with rapidity, and as he tore down the bushes to arrive within reach of them, he thus occasioned the noise which had attracted the attention of Montbleu.

Cocking his rifle once more, the young man raised it to his shoulder, and fired. A savage roar from the wounded beast followed, and when the smoke cleared away, Montbleu saw it making its way as fast as possible out of the thicket. He staid not to reload, but pulling forth one of his revolvers, started off after the animal, who was, by this, some distance in advance of him. His shot had taken effect in the left shoulder-blade, and this served to slightly hinder the creature's progress. Still, the bear was fleet of foot, and the young man soon had the mortification of losing sight of him. But to think of giving up the pursuit never entered his head. To track the animal would be easy, for at every step a huge drop of blood denoted the course the creature had taken. And so, soothing himself by the reflection that the bear would soon be weakened by loss of blood, the young man started on at a full run. How long he kept on he knew not, for he kept no note of the time. But he was at last beginning to feel fatigued, when he arrived in sight of a small pool of water, from whence a small rivulet derived its source. Lying close beside this pool, and licking its wound, was the bear.

Montbleu raised his revolver, and was about to fire, when, perceiving the animal was either ignorant, or took no notice of his presence, he changed his mind.

"A rifle-ball is more sure," he said to himself, as he returned his revolver to its place in his belt.

Carefully measuring out the requisite amount of powder, he poured it down the barrel, wrapped a bullet in a piece of cloth, and with the ramrod, sent it home. He next drew back the hammer, so as to show the nipple, placed thereon a cap, and the loading was completed.

During the loading, the bear had maintained his position near the pool of water, and just as the young man raised his weapon to his shoulder, the animal chanced to glance toward him. Giving vent to one or two growls, the beast rose to his feet, and essayed to make off again. But it was too late. The contents of Montbleu's rifle belched forth, and the bear rolled over heavily on its side, motionless.

The shot had not yet ceased to reëcho through the vaults of the forest, and the triumphant sportsman had barely the time to make a single step toward his trophy, when a clump of bushes near the pool of water was parted, and from out them stepped the giant form of a savage. It was the avenger, Red-Ax.

On first beholding this no less sudden than unexpected sight, a slight feeling of alarm took possession of the young man, but the friendly demeanor of the Indian soon served to banish all such thoughts; and shouldering his rifle, Montbleu approached the pool. He was now but a few paces from the Indian, who was carefully surveying him from head to foot.

"Stranger pale-face," said the Indian at last, "you are from the far East, where the red-man wanders no more, and where the graves of his forefathers are covered over with the towns of the pale-faces?"

"I am," answered Montbleu. "But how know you that?"

"For many reasons," answered Red-Ax. "One of them is, had you been living among red-men, you would not trust yourself alone in the forest, where every bush may conceal a foe."

"But I heard that the Indians were friendly, now?"

"Ugh! The Ojibwahs are serpents. They care not a tuft of grass for peace with the pale-faces."

"How?—you an Indian, and tell me this?"

"Red-Ax is an Indian, and is descended from the great race of the Ojibwahs, who, many moons ago, drove back the Sioux toward the setting sun. But his heart is the heart of a true white man, and he is their friend."

There was something grand in the manner in which these words were pronounced, and Montbleu did not fail to be impressed by them.

After some further conversation, Montbleu commenced

skinning the bear, in which operation he was helped by Red-Ax, who had volunteered his assistance. The incisions 'round the legs had been made, and the skin raised as far as the flanks, when the chief suddenly dropped his knife and rose to a standing position.

"What's the matter, chief?" asked Montbleu. "Any thing wrong?"

"Red-Ax thought he heard a noise. There! he was not mistaken," he answered, in a low voice. "His enemies are on his trail. The sounds of their moccasins tell him they are not many seconds distant."

"Ha! Then the Ojibwahs are your enemies as well as mine?"

"Even so," answered the chief. "For many moons Red-Ax has not slept in their lodges, and he is hunted like a wounded stag by the hungry wolves."

Wiping his knife upon the grass, he placed it in a sheath attached to his girdle. Montbleu left off his work on the bear, and imitated the example of the Indian.

"Come," said Red-Ax, "you must go with me. The serpents well know the print of my moccasin, and to be found with them now would be your death."

Montbleu at once shouldered his rifle, and the next moment they were moving rapidly away from the spot.

They followed the course of the little stream of which we have made mention. After going for some distance it began to gradually widen out, until it assumed the dimensions of a large creek.

It was here that Red-Ax halted, and with a few quick motions removed his moccasins from his feet. Montbleu imitated his example, and at a signal from the chief, they entered the water.

"This will throw the serpents off our trail, for some time," said Red-Ax; "and we shall thus be the gainers by the delay. Be careful, or you may slip. These sands are sometimes treacherous, and it is not every foot that knows how to tread them safely."

Profiting by the friendly warning, Montbleu placed each foot carefully and firmly on the bottom of the creek, the water of which—as they kept quite close to the bank—barely

reached above their knees. Ever and anon the chief would halt and assume a listening attitude, but each time he heard nothing to awaken his apprehensions.

They at length reached a spot where the bank sloped down to the water's edge, and which consequently offered them an easy access to *terra firma*. Motioning to his companion, the chief stepped from out the water. After again incasing their feet in their moccasins, the two plunged into the woods, their pace being as rapid as convenience would allow.

CHAPTER V.

ROLLIN'S TREASURE.

EARLY on the morning succeeding the interview between Salvarez and the Ojibwah chief, and a small number of his chosen warriors, a young Indian pushed off from the shore of St. Peter's, heading his canoe down the stream. He was arrayed in full Ojibwah costume, with but one exception—his face wanted the streaks of paint with which the savages are wont to embellish, or rather disfigure, their physiognomies. His form was tall and muscular, and he used the paddle with exceeding grace and ease.

He had accomplished, perhaps, the distance of a mile, when suddenly he described the arc of a circle with his paddle, and without diminishing its speed in the least, the canoe headed toward the shore. Arriving under the shadow of the bank, he rested on his paddle, and listened for a few seconds with fixed attention. But at last he gave vent to an "Ugh!" and caused the canoe to touch the land, when he sprung lightly ashore. The bank beneath which he had landed rose almost perpendicularly twenty feet above his head. Some distance further down the river, however, this bank began to slope to the water's edge, and the young Indian had no sooner hauled his craft beyond reach of the current, than he waded into the water and directed his course down the stream. As soon as he reached the spot where

the high bank reached no longer, he left the river and began making his way toward a hill, whose summit he could discern above the tops of the trees. It was the same hill which we described when we followed Rollins to his home, on the night of the arrival of the traders in St. John.

The hill stood not more than three-fourths of a mile from the river; and when the Indian reached its rocky base, he did not ascend it, as Rollins had done, but skirted around until he came to the *debouchure* of a deep cut in the hill forming the ravine in which stood the cabin of Rollins.

Though the Indian had been constantly on the alert before, he now doubled his exertions, for he had entered the ravine, a spot where, he well knew, he had no right to be. A narrow path, made by Rollins in passing to and from his cabin, was to be seen, but this the Indian studiously avoided. Dodging from rock to rock, and from bush to bush, ever and anon pausing to listen, his progress was slow, but none the less free from any noise which might serve to attract the attention of any one lurking in the immediate vicinity.

Arriving in sight of the cabin, and concealing himself behind a hazel bush, the young Ojibwah parted the stems with his hand sufficiently to admit of his eyes obtaining a full view of the cabin, some dozen rods away from his position. His caution had its reward, for seated upon a rude bench outside the hut, was the tall form of Rollins himself. He was employed in smoking a pipe, and gazing vacantly into the distance. Judging from appearance, his meditations were not very pleasant, for over his face had settled a dark, almost fierce expression.

The countenance of the young Indian betrayed his disappointment on seeing how matters stood, but he calmly settled himself down to await the time which should be favorable to the furtherance of his plans.

Half an hour passed, and then the owner of the cabin took his pipe from his mouth, knocked out the ashes, rose to his feet, and entered the rude house. Keenly on the alert, the young Indian watched these movements. Soon the white hunter reappeared. His rifle was resting in the hollow of his arm, and, with slow and measured strides, he started off along the path which led to the ravine.

The young Indian moved not until the sound of the man's retreating footsteps had long since died out; then he rose to his feet. With the utmost celerity of movement, he took from a pouch a few small pebbles, one of which he hurled toward the cabin. This failing to answer his purpose, he hurled another one, and with all his force. It struck the door, and the next moment the Indian wife of Rollins appeared upon the threshold.

A slight noise from the Ojibwah served to direct her attention toward him, and the moment her eyes lit upon him, she left the cabin, and approached the spot where he stood.

"Hold!" he exclaimed, when the woman had arrived within a few yards of him. "Approach not nearer. The eyes of your husband are cunning, and he may track you."

"Ugh!" said the woman. "Why comes Whistling-arrow here? What does he wish?"

"He comes with words from our chief."

"Then they must be heard," she answered, in a respectful tone.

"Our chief knows, Mar-et-sheea, that your pale-face husband has money. A pale-face has offered to kill the serpent, Red-Ax, but he must be paid. The Ojibwahs are poor, and your husband is rich, and you can get his gold. Do you hear me?"

"Mar-et-sheea has listened to all you have spoken. Since those are the words of our chief, she obeys. When the sky of the west is painted red four times more, the Whistling-arrow can come again."

The Indian made no answer, but, dropping to the ground, crawled away softly as a serpent through the bushes.

When Rollins returned to his cabin it was late that night. His movements were hasty and careless, showing that he was in a no more amiable mood than that in which he had departed that morning. He gazed round in search of his wife. She had wrapped herself in her blanket, and laid down upon the rude couch which served as a bed.

"Mar-et-sheea!" he called, in a somewhat loud voice. There was no response, and he repeated the call. Still there was no answer.

"All right," muttered Rollins. "She is fast asleep. Now is my chance."

Extinguishing the light burning in the room, he strode softly into the open air. Advancing in a straight line for some dozen rods, he came to a stand-still close to a young hickory.

Kneeling down, he drew forth a knife, and with it pried up a stone that served to conceal a small hole beneath it.

"I am not a man who puts much faith in dreams," he muttered to himself, "but last night I dreamed my treasure was gone, and it has haunted me all day."

Introducing his arm into the hole, his hand grasped something, which brought a smile to his face at once.

"Ha! My treasure is safe," he muttered.

At that instant a bush near by rustled, causing the man to be on the alert on the instant.

"It is only the wind," he muttered, at length, as he replaced the stone, and rose to his feet.

But he was mistaken. He did not perceive, owing to the darkness, the specter-like figure which flitted so silently from tree to tree, and entered the cabin just as he himself set about returning.

CHAPTER VI.

ELK-HORN BILL.

We will now return to Red-Ax and his companion, Montbleu, whom we left just as they had stepped from out the creek, and were plunging into the forest.

"We are approaching the river," said the chief, in answer to a question put to him by Montbleu. "Near it we shall find hills and cliffs, and where all the Ojibwah serpents, cunning as they are, could not find us in a moon's time, should we see fit to hide there."

That point of the forest through which they were passing was very dense, and it was with the utmost difficulty that

the rays of the sun found their way through the canopy of leaves.

"We must be careful," said Red-Ax, in a low voice, "for it is in such spots as these the Ojibwah lies in wait for his foes."

But, as they progressed, the forest began to assume a somewhat different aspect. The trees were not so large, nor did they grow in such close proximity to each other. Young hickories took the place of rugged oaks, and clumps of hazel that of the sturdy maple.

Young Montbleu was in the act of raising his glances toward the sun, in order to inform himself of the hour, when he felt the heavy hand of the chief laid upon his shoulder with a pressure that brought him to the ground in spite of himself.

"What is it, chief?" he asked, in a whisper.

"Red-Ax heard a noise," was the answer. "It was slight, but such a one is oftenest the most to be feared."

Some time passed, but the noise Red-Ax had heard failed to be repeated, or if it was, his sharp ears failed to detect it.

Accordingly, acting on the impression that "nothing ventured, nothing gained," the chief raised his head above the surrounding bushes, and glanced quickly about in every direction.

Almost simultaneously with his own, another head was seen to rise up into sight, and at the very same instant the eyes of both parties lit upon each other. Red-Ax made a quick movement of surprise, and his fingers clutched his bow. But the next instant a singular gleam of intelligence shot across his face, his fingers relaxed their hold of his bow, and he said, aloud:

"Ugh! Brother!"

At the same moment the sound of footsteps became audible and Montbleu rose to his feet. The footsteps belonged to a man some forty years of age, garbed in the habiliments of a professional trapper, and who showed, as he stepped forward, that his sturdy frame had not lost any of the vigor of its early manhood. His face, browned by sun and constant exposure, was an extremely open and pleasant one, and Montbleu felt

a lively sense of friendship for its owner, as he gazed upon him.

Advancing until he stood not three feet from the chief, the trapper halted, and placing the butt of his rifle on the ground, he stood leaning on it, while he surveyed the two before him.

"Wal, chief," he said to the Indian, "I reckon ye took me fur a red-skin, afore ye sighted me, eh?"

"My pale-face brother is right," said Red-Ax. "The woods are filled with the Ojibwahs, and Red-Ax must be on his guard against them."

"I know," said the trapper. "I know yer feelings well enough, chief. But who's this young feller ye've got along with you? Young feller, allow me to ax ye what's yer handle? No use actin' the part o' strangers, ye know. As fur me, I've forgot my real handle long, long ago, but if ye war to ax any one in the settlements who Elk-horn Bill are, they'd tell ye thet I am that feller."

"And my name is Montbleu," smiling inwardly at the trapper's odd manner of introducing himself.

"Oh! Frenchy, eh?"

"No, American," answered Montbleu, "and full-blooded, at that."

"Wal," said the trapper, "a man with a white heart is all the same to me, no matter what the color of his skin is, or what his religion may be. Now, here's the chief, here. His skin air red, but his soul is whiter by far than those of a good many white men I've had the misfortune to meet with in my lifetime."

The chief acknowledged the compliment by an "Ugh," but his manner showed that he wished to be on the move, and communicated in a few words to the trapper the situation of affairs.

"Wal, chief," said the trapper, "ef that be the case, we'll be on the move. This air no place to fight. Geehosephat! they'd lick us in the flap o' a beaver's tail."

It needed nothing further to set them on the move, nor did they halt again until they had arrived in close proximity to a wide and rushing stream, one of the minor tributaries of the St. Peter.

"Wal, chief," asked Elk-horn Bill, "what's your opeenyun —shall we cross hyur, or wait ontil we get further down the stream?"

"Here," replied Red-Ax. "The further we go down the stream the more rapid the torrent is."

The men were on the point of entering the stream when the crack of a rifle and the whistle of a bullet caused the three to halt. The shot had been fired from the opposite side of the creek, and whoever the marksman, he had but narrowly missed his aim, for the bullet had cut in two one of the plumes waving above the scalp-lock of the chief.

"Chief," said Elk-horn Bill, "now's yer time!" and with a leap forward, he plunged into the creek. Not less active was the Indian, and in less time than it takes to relate it they reached the opposite side, and were beating about the bushes in every direction.

"It was thar the varmint war," said the trapper, pointing to a willow, growing some yards back from the creek, "for 'twas thar I saw the smoke.

But, after a thorough search of the spot had been made, the men stood looking at each other with unconcealed astonishment, for not the slightest trace of a strange footstep was to be discovered. After their wonder had somewhat subsided, they searched further—searched until not a foot of ground for rods around had escaped their scrutiny. But they had as much success as before; and together they retraced their footsteps toward the creek.

"Chief," said the trapper, "the one as fired that shot air a cunning knave, be his skin white, or be it red. Not having the good fortin to see his tracks, of course it air not easy to say. But, there air another way that we kin tell, if we kin find the bullet he fired, and, judging from whar he stood and whar you was, it kin be.

"Thar's some difference," he continued, after a short pause "between bullets. We trappers buy our own lead an' cast our own bullets, while the few red-skins thet hev got guns, buy theirs from the traders; an' there's some difference atween the two, I reckon."

By this time they had reached the creek, and they crossed over to where they had left young Montbleu. Some distance

directly back of where Red-Ax had stood when the shot was fired, there grew a good-sized oak. Elk-horn Bill approached and commenced a close scrutiny of its trunk. Shortly his eye detected a spot where an indenture in the bark told him that the missile he was seeking for was there. Pulling forth his knife, he inserted its point several times into the bark, and the misshapen piece of metal rolled to the ground.

"This bullet warn't made by a trapper," said Elk-horn Bill, after he had carefully examined it, "nor does it appear to have been sold by a trader. It ain't lead"—whittling a piece off with his knife—"for it's too hard for that."

"No," said Montbleu, taking the piece of metal, "it is Pewter—a composition of tin and lead."

"Wal, I shall stick to it," replied the trapper; "for it may prove yet to be a useful tell-tale."

This interruption in their progress proved to be, after all, somewhat unfortunate, for the enemies following upon the trail of the outcast chief profited by it, and just as the little party found themselves on the opposite side of the creek, a dozen savages suddenly emerged from the bushes. With loud yells, they plunged into the stream, and commenced wading across. Some of them, however, were destined never to reach the bank alive, for they had barely gained the center of the stream when the reports of three rifles sounded, and as many savages fell splashing backward into the water, with a suddenness that knocked several others off their feet.

Simultaneously with their shots, Red-Ax and his companions dashed away at full speed, the chief and the trapper loading their rifles as they ran. As for Montbleu, he was too much of a novice to attempt this, so he contented himself with the reflection that his six-shooters were still loaded, and ready for immediate use, when wanted.

Some twenty minutes elapsed, when, at a signal from Red-Ax, the party came to a halt, and listened. Their pursuers were after them, for their footsteps could be plainly heard, as they dashed at full speed through the bushes, and over the dry, crisp autumn leaves.

"Most of the warriors are young," said Red-Ax, "and their legs, like their wind, can outstrip ours; and we are yet some distance from the river."

"True, chief," said the trapper. "I ain't so soople as I war some years ago, an' my legs can't carry me as fur. But the bluff ain't fur from hyar, an' once thar, we kin whip the varmints three to one."

It must not be supposed that, during this short conversation that the three had remained on a stand-still. On the contrary, they pressed forward with greater energy than ever. At length the bluff of which the trapper had made mention rose up before them, and a few moments later they concealed themselves behind the rocks at its base.

The spot was a well-chosen one. On either side their bodies were sheltered by high, rugged rocks, while the cliff above their heads was so steep that either ascent or descent of it, at that point, would have been simply impossible.

Young Montbleu commenced loading his rifle, but scarcely was the charge of powder measured out, when the foremost of the enemy appeared. He was a tall, powerful-looking savage, and as he approached the edge of the open piece of ground intervening between them and the base of the bluff, he trod softly, and kept glancing about him in a quick, suspicious manner. He offered a splendid mark, and aiming one of his revolvers, he was about to fire; but before he could do so the hand of the trapper was thrust under the hammer, and he said:

"Not yet, young feller, not yet. In cases like this, it don't pay to be too quick; an' a shot too soon often makes hours of trouble arterwards."

Just then the eyes of the savage were directed toward the rocks, and the gleam of intelligence which shot across showed that the fugitives were discovered. He quickly threw up his arm toward the heavens, and brought his hand down to his chest, which was intended to inform the fugitives that he wished to speak to them.

"I'll do the palaverin', chief," said the trapper, raising his head and shoulders above the rocks. He then demanded of the savage what he wished.

"The Ojibwahs," was the answer, "follow not after the footsteps of the pale-faces, but after one of their race—he whom the pale-faces call the Red-Ax."

"Well?" demanded the trapper.

"Our chief says he must be given up."

"Tell your chief," yelled Elk-horn Bill, in a voice of thunder, "that, if his squaws are better than our men, to come and take him."

The words caused the Indian to fall back, which he did in a very hasty manner; while loud whoops and yells, the usual precursor of an Indian fight, began to echo through the forest.

"They called us squaws," cried a voice, in broken English.

"They shall see!"

In a body, the savages dashed from out their cover, and the three rifles cracked together. This somewhat checked, but was far from staying their movements. The Indians knew that the rifles of their enemies were empty, and a fresh outburst of yells succeeded. But they were of short duration. Whipping his revolvers from hisbelt, Montbleu handed one of them to Elk-horn Bill. The trapper joyfully seized it, and before three shots more had been fired, the enemy wheeled about, and sought refuge among the bushes.

"Geehosephat!" exclaimed the scout, returning the weapon to its owner. "The red-skins hain't learnt the vartues o' thet kind o' weepun, yet."

By this time, the sun had long since passed its meridian, and was beginning its descent to the western horizon. The besieged felt confident that they would not be attacked again until night, and until the savages had time to send to their village for reinforcements. Five of their number lay stiff on the opening, and they would never quit the spot until either their enemies escaped, or they had been revenged by taking their lives.

While the sun continued its downward course, and while the savages kept a sharp look-out toward the rocks, the chief and Elk-horn Bill were keenly on the alert for any thing which they could turn to advantage, and escape, thereby.

"Chief," said the trapper, at last, pointing toward a wide fissure in the rocks at his back, "it appears to me that that will show us how to escape the red-skins, if we follow it up. So, while you an' the young stranger keep an eye out yonder, I'll go an' explore it."

The old trapper entered the fissure, and became lost in the darkness. But in something less than twenty minutes he returned, his face wearing a pleased look.

"It's all right," he said. "The cleft ends in the cavern that looks out on the other side o' the bluff."

Without a word, Montbleu and the chief arose, and entered the narrow passageway, which, however, gradually widened as they progressed.

When they had passed over some twenty rods, the passage ended, as the trapper said, in a cavern, of large dimensions. Another passageway was traversed, and the three found themselves in the open air again.

In less than half an hour more the trio reached the river, and, accompanied by Elk-horn Bill, Montbleu returned to the settlement, where they arrived shortly after sundown. As for Red-Ax, he refused to accompany them, saying that he had business that night, which could not be put off.

CHAPTER VII.

A MYSTERIOUS ENEMY.

The treaty which had been existing between the settlers of St. John was carefully kept during the summer, but like other similar treaties, the savages soon ceased to pay any regard to it. The villagers were alarmed by several circumstances, but more particularly so by one. One day, some two or three days after the arrival of the traders in St. John, Old Kini-ki-nik happened to make one of his customary visits to the village of his tribe, and when he returned, his face wore a gloomy, dejected look, which did not escape the vigilant eyes of the trappers who happened to be in the village. The Indian was questioned.

"Ugh!" he said. "Old Kini-ki-nik's heart weeps, and he is angry. Heap of warriors in his village."

"Ha! Strange warriors?"

"Ugh! yes," he grunted. "Paint much, talk much. Red-

man's hatchet is dull and rusty, but soon it will be sharp and red."

This was enough for the ears of the suspicious settlers, and the fort was got ready for their immediate reception, as soon as it should be deemed necessary. The traders, too, on learning the news, determined to put off their journey up the river until affairs should wear a more favorable aspect.

In the meantime, the friendship which had sprung up between Henry Montbleu and Maud Rockville on their first meeting, had ripened each hour until it amounted to that which time nor distance can efface. Since the night of his arrival in St. John, all they had seen of each other was an occasional glimpse; but, on the evening when old Kini-ki-nik brought the news from the Indian village, he saw her standing on the bank of the river, a short distance from the fort, and alone.

Making bold enough to approach her, he said:

"Miss Rockville, the evening is a delightful one. Suppose we take a ride on the river?"

She consented; and after he had secured a canoe they embarked, and soon found themselves afloat on the placid surface of the stream. He paddled the canoe some distance out from the shore, then turned its bow up the current.

Their movements had not failed to be seen by Old Kini-ki-nik, who, remembering what Rollins had promised him, had kept a wary eye on the movements of the young girl ever since

"Ugh!" he grunted. "There is some news for Rollins."

The old fellow, always with an eye open to profit, cared very little for whom he worked, as long as he made any thing by it. Had he been hired by Montbleu not to watch him, the old fellow would suddenly have become blind as a bat to all his movements. Before long, to the delight of the Indian, who was anxious to receive the promised reward, Rollins himself appeared on the scene.

"Well, Kini-ki-nik," asked the man, "have you obeyed my orders?"

"Ugh. Yes."

"Well, have you seen them together much?"

"Not before to-night," was the answer. "They are on the river together now."

"Ha!"—and his eyes fairly flashed with rage. "Tell me quick, Kini-ki-nik, which way did they go?"

The Indian pointed up the river; and without waiting for any thing more, Rollins turned on his heel, rapidly crossed the clearing on which the little village stood, and then disappeared in the bushes.

It was just about this time that young Montbleu, considering that he had gone as far up the river as safety would allow, turned the head of the canoe down the stream, allowing it to float with the current, while he conversed with his beautiful companion.

In time they reached a place in the river where the land ran out in a point for some distance into the water. It was a beautiful spot, covered with graceful trees, and the young man, who was an intense admirer of all that was beautiful, drew the attention of his companion toward it. But what was his surprise, while they were admiring it, to see a puff of smoke circle up among the bushes, and a bullet buried itself in the paddle he held in hand. Dumb with astonishment, his eyes sought those of his companion, but in hers was depicted the same look as in his own.

"What can it mean!" he exclaimed, when at last he found nerve to speak.

"It must be Indians," she suggested, in a voice that betrayed the alarm she felt.

"Cowards!" he exclaimed, "to fire on defenseless people."

And he dipped the paddle deep into the water, causing the canoe to leap forward. But ere he had time to dip the blade a second time, the crack of a rifle broke the stillness a second time, and again did a bullet strike the paddle, but this time with a force that caused it to fly from the young man's hand, and beyond his reach.

Here was a dilemma. What was to be done? But one hope remained. As the current bore the canoe past the settlement, he might succeed in making himself heard by some one, and then all would be right. If not, they would be borne down the river, how far, he knew not.

No more shots were fired, for, by this time, the canoe was far below the point, and in a few moments it would be opposite the settlement.

The moment his eye caught sight of the fort which stood nearer to the river than the cabins of the settlers, he raised his voice to its loudest pitch, and called for help.

When they arrived opposite the fort, the twilight was just deepening into darkness, and to the extreme discomfiture of the young man, he was unable to detect any one who might be within sound of his voice. Still, this did not at all prevent him from using his utmost exertions in order to be heard, but the canoe drifted onward with the rapid current, and not a voice responded to his own, telling him he was heard.

It was the first time in his life that the young man had been placed in so serious a dilemma, but his was not that kind of a nature to yield to despair. Why not let himself into the water, and push the canoe ashore by swimming? The plan was a good one, under the circumstances, and he wondered why he had not thought of it before.

The thought no sooner struck him, than he prepared to execute it; but, before he had time to let himself down into the water, he was interrupted by the voice of his companion.

"I may be mistaken," she said, "but I certainly thought I heard the sound of a paddle."

He paused, and listened intently. By this time it was dark, and so much so that he could not see three feet before him upon the deeply shadowed water.

"You were right," he said to his companion. "Thank Heaven! we were heard after all."

The canoe they heard was coming toward them at a rapid rate, and in a few moments it lay alongside theirs. To make out who its occupant was the darkness rendered impossible, but Montbleu could just perceive the outlines of a tall and powerful-looking form.

"Get in here," said a deep, morose voice.

Montbleu obeyed by seizing the arm of the young girl, and assisting her to step into the other canoe. He was then about to follow himself, but before he could do so, the clenched hand of the unknown was raised on high, and, descending with lightning-like rapidity, it struck the young man a blow on his chest, knocking him over backward into the water.

Breathless, he rose to the surface, and gazed about him. The canoe had disappeared, but he could hear the measured

dip of the paddle, informing him that he was being rapidly left behind. He—being an excellent swimmer—struck out for the shore, his breast heaving with the conflicting emotions of anger, and apprehensions for the safety of Maud. Who was the person who had so suddenly and unceremoniously deprived him of her company? and what had been his reasons for so doing? He had injured no one, as far as he knew and even supposing he had, what a cowardly way of taking revenge! The thought flashed across his mind that perhaps the one who had given him the blow, was the same person who had fired at him, and had thus been the means of placing him in his subsequent dilemma.

Reaching the bank, he crawled out of the water, sore and fatigued. Knowing that if he made the attempt, he would not be very apt to find the settlement that night, he threw himself down under a clump of hazels, and was soon lost in the oblivion of sleep.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE LOST TRAIL.

The first flash of the morning sun awoke Montbleu from his slumbers, and he at once sprung to his feet. To his chagrin, he now saw that he was on the opposite bank of the river to that on which stood St. John, and as he had no canoe with which to cross the water-course, he turned his face up the stream, and began making his way along the bank. Soon this bank assumed the proportions of a high and rocky ledge, along which progress was extremely difficult.

The young man was about the center of this ledge, when a shout from the river far below caused him to glance thither. His eye immediately lit upon a canoe, and sunk almost to its gunwales by the weight of some half dozen hunters and trappers. Among them was the well-known form of Elk-horn Bill, and his voice it was which had attracted the young man's attention.

Young Montbleu answered, and while he crept along the ledge as fast as possible, they turned the head of their canoe toward the shore. After crawling forward some twenty yards further, a spot presented itself where the young man could descend to the river, a chance of which he gladly availed himself. When he reached the bottom, he found the canoe had anticipated him.

"Jump in, young feller, jump in," cried Elk-horn Bill. "She's crowded, but thar's room fur another, I reckon."

Montbleu stepped in the canoe, and it was pushed from the shore.

"Wagh! young feller, we didn't expect to come across ye so soon. We heerd the news o' yer mishap this mornin'."

"Ha!" said the young man. "Then Miss Rockville is safe."

"Safe? Yes; an' 'twas she as sent us arter ye, although she war mightily skeered, lest ye should be dead."

"Then she told you all that happened?"

"Every thing. The varmint as took her from ye landed her safe at the village, but not a word did he say so as to let her know who he war."

"Do you think it was an Indian, Bill?" asked Montbleu.

"No," was the reply, in a decisive tone. "This mornin' two canoes war missin' from the village, one being that as you took—the other by the varmint as followed you, for we saw that by the tracks he made."

"And the tracks were not those of an Indian?"

"As I said afore, no. The tracks war big enough for the chief, Red-Ax, but the toes, the depth of the track at the heels showed that, whoever made 'em his skin war white."

For a time nothing further was spoken, and at last the canoe had arrived opposite the village. Elk-horn Bill now informed the young man that it was their intention to track the trail to the source, and by that, some light might be thrown upon the somewhat mysterious affair.

Running the canoe ashore, the trappers debarked, and forthwith proceeded to the spot from whence the missing canoe had been taken.

"Thar," said Elk-horn Bill, addressing the young man, and pointing to the ground. "Thar's the varmint's track."

Montbleu looked as directed, but his want of experience in such matters failed to show him any thing more than the ordinary verdure with which the ground was covered.

From the river, the trail led in a somewhat circuitous line toward an angle of the fort, and from thence in a straight line toward the forest. But, the moment this was reached, t obliqued sharply until it approached to some few yards rom the river, whence it continued in an almost direct line to the point from which young Montbleu had been fired at.

Here the track ended near a thicket of young hickories, and Montbleu easily recognized that as the spot where he had seen the smoke of the rifle curl up.

We have said that it was here that the trail ended; but on a more thorough examination of the thicket, the trail commenced again, leading off in a direction that at once caused some surprise, which was not diminished when some time later the trailers found themselves in close proximity to the village again.

The trappers halted, and, leaning on their rifles, entered into a hurried consultation.

"This is somewhat singular, I'll allow," said one.

"Beats me all holler," said another.

"Kumrades," said Elk-horn Bill, "thur's only one way as I kin see through this thing. The varmint must hev come into the village in a different direction from this, an' then gone up to the pi'nt an' fired at the young feller, an' then made tracks to the village again fur the canoe."

The trapper's sagacity had led him to infer what was, as the reader already knows, in reality the truth.

"Well?"

"Well, we must look for the track he made when he fus entered the village; an' ef that can't be found, *it must be one o' the villagers*, though I'm far from thinking that such air the case."

"Whose trail seeks the pale-faced braves—that of an Ojibwah?"

The trappers were startled, and turning, they beheld the towering form of the chief, Red-Ax. He was standing perfectly still, arms folded, and the look of composure which

ever characterized him was never more evident than at that moment.

"Ha!" said Elk-horn Bill. "You crawl upon us softly as the serpent, and you are the only one that can do it, I reckon, 'ithout my hearin' it. You ask if we air seeking for the trail of an Ojibwah. I answer, no. Look hyar. Did ye ever spot such a footstep as this afore?"

The chief calmly unfolded his arms, walked a few paces forward, and surveyed the track pointed out by the trapper.

"Yes," he replied, in an instant's time, "even such a track did Red-Ax meet but a short time ago."

"Ha!" exclaimed several of the trappers. "Where, chief?"

"Not over the flight of an arrow from here—just beyond the spring near yonder oak."

The little band moved rapidly toward the designated spot, where the tracks of which Red-Ax had spoken met their eager scrutiny. They corresponded exactly with the former ones, and led toward the village.

"Thur!" said Elk-horn Bill, pointing triumphantly toward the newly-discovered trail; "it's adzactly as I told ye. Hyur's whar the varmint fust entered the village. Now fur his den."

The party were instantly in motion once more. To follow the trail was easy, for the tracks were deep, and formed by one who was a heavy and careless walker.

"The varmint," said Elk-horn Bill, as they progressed, "took his time when he made these tracks, while those leadin' to the p'int showed he war on a keen run."

"After a walk of three-quarters of an hour, the party arrived at the bluff, at the base of which ran a small stream of water. The trail was plainly visible to this point, but the instant it approached the stream it became lost to view.

"The cuss has perhaps left his tracks on the other side o' the stream," said one of the party.

"'Tain't likely," said Elk-horn Bill. "You see, kumrades, this stream ain't the width o' a frog-leap, an' ef the varmint hadn't a-wished to hide his trail, he'd 'a' never wet his moccasins, but jumped across."

My pale-face brother speaks the truth," said Red-Ax, who had crossed the stream a short time before, and had been closely scrutinizing the ground. "The pale-face did not cross the stream, and the trail is lost."

The trappers sprung forward to satisfy themselves that such was in reality the case; and their disappointed air soon showed that the chief was not mistaken.

"Ugh!" the latter said, "the pale-face could not keep in the water all day. He must have left it, somewhere."

"Right, chief, right!" exclaimed Elk-horn Bill. "Up the stream, half o' ye, an' s'arch every foot of it as far as it goes, while the rest o' us will go down'ards."

Four of the party immediately commenced to follow along the bank of the stream toward its source, searching every foot of the ground for signs of the lost trail, while the remainder imitated their example in the opposite direction.

The latter had not proceeded far when an exclamation from the chief caused them to come to a stand-still, and on turning round—for he had brought up the rear of the party—they beheld him kneeling down, and gazing intently into the water. At that point the hitherto sandy bed of the stream gave place to one of mud, from which was growing a heavy crop of water-cress. Extending his arm, and pushing aside the plants, he laid bare the impress of a moccasined foot.

"Wagh!" exclaimed a voice; "that track warn't made by a red-skin, and yet it ain't the one we've been follerin'."

"No," said another. "This ain't more'n half the size of the other."

"That's adzactly my opeenyun," said a third "The tracks war made by another party. See—thur they go, leadin' from up the bluff. I'll bet a cent-plug o' terbacy I know now who these last tracks war made by."

"Wal, who?" asked several voices.

"By the feller as lives just over the bluff—Rollins."

"But who made the other tracks is what we want to know," said Elk-horn Bill.

And as the words admitted of no answer, there was a short interval of silence. Up to this time, Red-Ax had not taken a part in the conversation, but now an "Ugh" from him at once drew the attention of the trappers toward himself, who knew

from his mien that he had something of importance to communicate. At a signal from Elk-horn Bill, he said:

"Pale-faces, these tracks before you are small—those further up the stream, large. But, measure the distance of the steps between each other, and in the two trails the distance is the same. Again, both trails are deep at the heel, and in both the turn of the toes is the same."

Here he paused.

"Wal, chief," asked Elk-horn Bill, "what does all that go to prove?"

"That the two trails," answered Red-Ax, with the tone of one firm in his conviction, "were made by the same pale-face. Here is where he entered the stream—yonder where he left it."

"You may be right, chief," said Elk-horn Bill; "an' ef these tracks an' the others *war* made by Rollins, he war the one we air arter."

Scarcely had the trapper said these words when a clump of hazel, a short distance from him, was parted, and from out it stepped the tall form of Rollins himself.

As he stepped forward, his mien was savage and defiant, bespeaking, plainer than words could have done, that he had heard what had passed, and that his evil passions had got the mastery over him, and ready to break forth at any instant. His gaze rested chiefly upon the Indian, who returned it, however, unflinchingly.

CHAPTER IX.

MONTBLEU A PRISONER.

ROLLINS advanced, his rifle lying in the hollow of his arm, until he stood not more than half a dozen feet from the little party, when he came to a stand-still, surveying them for a few moments in silence.

"Well," he said at last, struggling to keep down his passion, "is it I you seek? What cause have you for following my trail, like you would that of a red-skin?"

But the moment these words were spoken he turned somewhat pale, and bit his lip.

"Ha!" said Elk-horn Bill, not the least disturbed by the man's ire. "Then you own that this is your trail?"

"Why should I deny it? If it will do you any good, it is!"

"And"—the trapper gazed steadily into the eyes of the one before him—"so is that further up the stream?"

"It is probable," Rollins answered, with a self-possession that, for a person in his temper, was a little remarkable. "I pass and repass here often; and if you look closely, you may find a hundred of my trails. But again, I ask you, why do you search for me? I am here—now speak."

"Come with me," returned Elk-horn Bill, calmly. "I will answer you, presently."

With the utmost bravado, Rollins followed the trapper to where the trail had been lost in the stream. The trapper pointed toward the huge footprints in the grass, and asked Rollins if he was the one by whom they were made.

Forcing a laugh, he answered:

"And so you allowed yourselves to be fooled, like a pack of women, by this lying red-skin?"

"Red-Ax speaks nothing but words of truth," was the Indian's answer, in a proud tone.

Stooping down, Rollins pulled off his moccasin, and flung it to the ground.

"There!" he said. "There is my moccasin. Now measure it by these tracks, and see how they agree. Bah! Taking tracks like these, which are larger than those of this vagrant chief, for mine!"

A flash of anger passed over the countenance of the chief at this insult; but he said nothing. In his eye was a look of triumph, however, but on what account could not then have been easily fathomed.

In the mean time, one of the trappers picked up the moccasin, and placed it in one of the tracks. As all had foreseen, they failed to correspond.

Rollins cast around him a look of triumph. He stepped forward to receive his moccasin; but he was interrupted by Red-Ax.

"Give me the moccasin," said the Indian.

Rollins was on the point of refusing, but before he could do so, the requested article was in the chief's hands, and so he kept silent, watching the Indian with feelings not unmingled with fear.

Quietly surveying the article in his hands for a few moments, Red-Ax next proceeded to turn it inside-out. This being done, displayed a small roll in the anterior part, which, on being spread out, exhibited a moccasin of over twice the usual dimensions. It was placed in one of the footprints, and the two corresponded to a hair's breadth.

As one man, the trappers turned toward Rollins, who answered them with a fierce look of defiance.

"Well," he sneered, "do they match?"

"Do they?" said Elk-horn Bill, in a voice so stern that it caused even his companions to start. "See for yourself! Miserable varmint, ye air our prisoner!"

Standing perfectly calm, it was not until the trapper approached the villain close enough to execute his design, that any resistance was offered. Then, giving the trapper a desperate thrust in the side with the barrel of his rifle, the villain turned, and in an instant was lost in the bushes. Fortunately the blow struck the bullet-pouch slung from the trapper's shoulder, and he escaped without other injury than a fall. When he recovered his legs, he darted along with the rest into the thicket, but not a sign of the fugitive was to be seen, except the trail he left.

"On, on!" was the command. "He won't run far without his moccasin afore he gets a thorn in his foot, I reckon."

"Hold!" at this moment cried the voice of Red-Ax, and in a tone which caused the party to obey him on the instant.

It was perhaps fortunate for themselves that they did so for from the spot where they would have been a moment later arose above the bushes the gaudy plumes of a score of savages. Their bearing was fierce and hostile, their eyes glittered like those of snakes, and their nostrils alternately expanded and contracted, as if they already scented the blood which was soon to flow.

The trappers had no sooner concealed themselves from the eyes of the Indians by the canopy of bushes, than, at a signal

from the chief, they commenced to crawl as fast as possible back to the point from which they had just come. It was not without the utmost quickness and exertion that they arrived safely at the wished-for spot, where they no longer hesitated about rising to their feet. Some twenty rods off was a belt of heavy timber, and for this the band made with all possible speed.

But before a dozen rods had been passed over, a voice bade them lie low. The savages had discovered their retreat, and were in full pursuit.

"Let's stand our ground like men," said Elk-horn Bill. "It's more honorable, accordin' to my way o' thinkin', to stan' up an' meet your death, if it comes, like a trapper should, than to have a red-skin send his arrow into your back. But keep your eyes peeled. I see the varmints air gettin' ready to let fly. Wait a minute, an' we'll hev them within reach."

Inured to danger as the trappers were, it took severe straining for them to wait longer. The foe was easily within range, and not one of the trappers doubted that he could drop his man. But, the word of Elk-horn Bill was law among them, and they submitted without a murmur.

The moments passed, bringing their wily foes several yards nearer; and with a quick gesture, Elk-horn Bill gave the signal to fire. Up went their rifles, and in an instant they lost sight of the foe by the canopy of smoke. How many of the savages perished is impossible to say, for, when the smoke cleared off, not one was in sight, living or dead.

"Wagh!" said one of the men, as they proceeded with the loading of their rifles, "we cleared 'em out pretty well, I reckon, but I'm afeerd we shall hev trouble yit. If the boys as was sent up the stream to look for the trail was hyur, we'd charge 'em. As it is, thar's too few o' us."

Just at this moment an arrow came whizzing toward them, plowing the ground at their feet. But, to the surprise of all, it came from the woods behind them.

That they were now to be harassed by a new and unexpected enemy, flashed across the minds of the trappers, who, however, nothing daunted, pepared to defend themselves against all odds.

The advent of the first arrow was quickly succeeded by

another and another, until at least a dozen had whizzed by, but without effecting any injury, however. Seeing this, the foe restrained themselves, hoping that those of their party who had begun the attack would succeed in driving the trappers nearer to the forest. But as this party had met with so warm a reception, they were not at all in a hurry about showing themselves.

Red-Ax, who had been keeping a wary eye in every direction, at that moment turned toward the trappers, and counted their number, in order to assure himself that none were missing. This done, he directed his eagle glance toward a small bush some few yards distant, with rifle cocked and ready. He did not wait long before the bush slightly rustled. It was hardly preceptible, but enough for the senses of the Indian. He brought his rifle to his shoulder with a quick jerk, and in an instant his finger pressed the trigger. The report was instantly followed by a loud shrick, and a half-naked savage bounded into the air, his right arm rendered useless by the bullet from Red-Ax's rifle. He fell heavily to the ground, and fear having got the mastery over pain, he tried to crawl away into the bushes. But the unfortunate savage was too late. Ere he had time to crawl half a dozen feet he felt strong and rude hands grasping him, and he was jerked into a spot clear of bushes. Seizing the savage by his scalp-lock, Red-Ax jerked him into an upright position, and with a ligtning like blow, sunk his long knife to its hilt in the Ojibwah's bosom. Then, before the dying struggles were over, the victorious chief passed his knife round the scalp, and with a jerk tore it reeking from its socket. Holding it aloft, he triumphantly gazed at it for a few seconds, then attached it to his girdle.

"Another!" he murmured. "Waunona, this is the tenth that has fallen by my hand since thy cruel death."

The sight of fresh blood seemed to inspire the trappers with fresh courage and fierceness, a feeling in which Elk-horn Bill himself partook. Murmurs were to be heard to the effect that they wished to make a dash, and end the struggle by a hand-to-hand conflict.

"On, then, on!" exclaimed Elk-horn Bill, seeing that it would be useless to much longer restrain their impetuosity.

It needed nothing more; in a body the men dashed forward, entering the thicket in which the savages were concealed in a twinkling. One or two rifles cracked, as many savages fell to the earth, and then the battle began in good earnest. The trappers fought with their clubbed rifles. But among them all, the form of the chief, Red-Ax, was the most conspicuous. With his terrible ax, he seemed a veritable Hercules, and woe to the savage that came within its swing.

During this, young Montbleu had not been idle. When, with the trappers, he rushed forward, he grasped in his hand one of his revolvers, but before he had time to use it, he felt himself seized from behind by the long and sinewy arms of a savage. Montbleu was a man of more than ordinary strength and he succeeded in freeing himself sufficiently to turn, and thus engage his adversary face to face. Over and over they rolled, crushing down bushes in their course. The struggle was long, but at last it came to an end. Montbleu succeeded in clutching his antagonist by the throat, holding his grip until the arms around him slackened, and the savage was strangled. Thoroughly exhausted, the young man rose to his feet, but barely had he done so, when a footstep sounded behind him, and turning, he beheld the savage face of Rollins.

"Ha!" said the villain. "We have met, face to face, and alone, at last!"

He accompanied these words by an upraising of his arm, and then attempted to strike Montbleu to the earth. But the latter was too quick for him. Ducking his head, he avoided the intended blow, at the same instant planting a blow over the region of the other's stomach, he caused the villain to fall in a heap to the ground, strong as he was. Quick as thought, the young man draws his knife. He is at his antagonist's side, the point of his keen blade at the miscreant's bosom—but, before he has time to give it the requisite thrust, his arms are pinned to his sides and he is pulled over backward. In vain does he struggle to free himself, for a moment later Rollins rises from the ground with the fury of a demon.

At that moment, too, he hears the triumphant shouts of the trappers, and one or two more savages on the full run, appear upon the scene, giving the alarm to Rollins and the savage who had just saved his life.

"Come, dog!" said the villain, grasping his prisoner by the arm. "You shall be attended to afterward."

The young man attempts to free himself, but the glitter of a knife is before his eyes, and he no longer dares to disobey.

CHAPTER X

A TERRIBLE SENTENCE.

ALARMED by the shouts of the pursuing trappers, the savages and Rollins hastened forward with all their speed, causing their prisoner to keep a like gait. This Montbleu found no difficult task to perform, as, when his passion subsided, he considered that a full compliance with the every wish of his captors would materially increase his safety, no less than his chances for escaping. Nor was he far wrong, for a show of bravado in a case like his is worse than useless.

After skirting round the base of the cliff, the savages turned sharply to the right, and followed a beaten path through the forest which would bring them to the river. On the start, the savages would occasionally prick their captive rather severely with the points of their knives, in order to quicken his movements; but when they now saw his apparent resignation to his fate, they left off. The shouts of their pursuers had been growing fainter and fainter, each passing moment, and when they were well in the forest, the sounds ceased altogether.

In less than twenty minutes after entering the forest, the party reached the base of a high bank, whose steepness made it somewhat difficult of ascent. But up it they scrambled, and right before them was rolling the majestic river.

"Can the pale-face swim?" asked one of the savages of the young man.

"Can the fish swim, or the eagle fly?"

"Ugh! The pale-face answers as becomes a warrior," returned the savage, admiring the fearless reply of the prisoner.

A piece of buck-skin lasso was now produced, and the savage who had addressed Montbleu proceeded to fasten one end of it to the prisoner, and the other to himself.

"Why is this?" asked the young man, quietly.

"Ugh! If the pale-face can swim like a fish, he can perhaps dive like a fish."

"You think I will try to escape, eh? But, no; I will not."

Hearing this, the savage would have, in all probability relinquished his design, had it not been for the interference of Rollins.

"Go on! go on!" he said, to the Indian. "Don't let him fool you so easily. I value him too much"—ending his words with a terrible oath.

The Indian performed his bidding at once. One end of the cord was secured to the arm of the savage, the other to the arm of the prisoner: and, as this now freed the young man from his promise, he determined upon making his escape at once, if a fair opportunity should occur. In his breast-pocket he carried a small clasp-knife, and if he could succeed in opening it while swimming, he might outstrip the savages in reaching the bank, when he would be safe, for he knew that the trappers could not be far away. The plan was a desperate one, certainly, but the only one that could be employed, under the circumstances.

Fearing lest they should be overtaken, the party plunged at once into the river. At about the center of the stream was a low, flat island, covered with grass and wild vines, and where a few shrubs had found root. For some cause, the savages headed for this spot, and as the swim was so short a one, no opportunity presented itself to the prisoner to put into execution his hastily-formed plan, for he was watched with the eyes of an Argus. On one side of him swam the savage who was attached to him by the lasso, and on the other he was guarded by the villain, Rollins.

Arriving at the island, the party stepped from out the water, and immediately concealed themselves from the view of the shore they had just left, in order that their retreat would not easily be discovered by their pursuers.

In this position, they awaited the going down of the sun

During the morning and afternoon the sky had been clear, excepting a few light, fleecy clouds which floated slowly on, but toward the close of the day, dark, heavy clouds began rolling into view from the east, precursing rain.

Darkness at last set in, and one of the savages plunged into the river, soon becoming lost to view. At this time, too, as if fearing that their prisoner might endeavor to profit by the darkness, and make his escape, the savages with a few tethers of buck-skin, bound his arms tightly behind his back. Then, seating themselves by his side, they pulled forth their calumets, charged them, and began to while away the time by smoking. Soon, one of them, with a view, no doubt, of trying their prisoner's state of mind, thrust the stem of his pipe into the young man's mouth. With the greatest of nonchalance he drew in several mouthfuls of the aromatic vapor, and then the pipe was taken away.

"Good!" said Montbleu, to the savage. "The kini-ki-nik of the red-man is fine, and worthy of being smoked by a brave."

The Indian returned the compliment with a "Ugh."

By this time it was dark as pitch, and the stillness of the night was broken only by the cry of the owl, and at short intervals by the rumbling of the yet distant thunder.

In about two hours from the time the savage had taken his departure, a sound, occasioned by the dip of a paddle, caused the savages on the island to start, and strain their eyes in their endeavors to pierce the inky darkness. But they kept perfectly silent until a few words of Ojibwah, spoken by him in the canoe, assured them that it was no enemy that was near; then they rose to their feet, and motioned to their prisoner to do the same. Groping his way along after his captors, Montbleu soon found himself standing in close proximity to a canoe, which on being ordered to do so by the rude voice of Rollins, he entered.

A moment later the canoe was out in the stream, and now, for the first time, Montbleu felt the force of the wind which was blowing in a terrific manner across the river. Knowing the danger of allowing the hurricane to strike the vessel sideways, the savages directed its bow straight for the leeward shore, which, on being reached, served to deaden the force of

the blast. The canoe was now headed up the stream, and after something over an hour's hard paddling, a spot hove into sight which was illuminated by a huge fire on the shore. This sight seemed to increase the exertions of the savages, and they plied their paddles with an energy that caused the canoe to fairly leap over the water.

On arriving opposite the spot, the light craft was run ashore, and the party debarked. Hardly waiting to draw the canoe beyond the reach of the current, the savages laid hands on their prisoner, and half-led, half-dragged, he was hurried into the presence of a hundred stern-visaged warriors.

They were seated in a circle round a huge fire, and the advent of the prisoner was greeted with cries of indignation. The calumets they had been smoking were laid aside, tomahawks were grasped, and, as they sprung to their feet, they flourished them in a menacing manner about their heads. One of them, with an aspect more ferocious, if possible, than any of the rest, approached the prisoner, grasped him fiercely by the hair, and placed before his eyes the glittering blade of a knife. For the first time, Montbleu felt his heart sink within him; and he closed his eyes, fully expecting that his flesh would feel the keen blade piercing it. But such was not the motive of the savage, who soon grew, with the rest of his brethren, quiet.

Resuming their seats again round the fire, calumets were filled afresh, and for a time they were smoked in moody silence. At last, one of the warriors, with all the glittering paraphernalia of a savage chief, rose haughtily to his feet, and demanded, in a stern voice:

"Who is the pale-face prisoner?"

"He is the slayer of Wah-wah-tee, and whom my arm saved from piercing the heart of our pale-face brother,' answered one of Montbleu's captors.

"Ugh! Wah-wah-tee has gone to the spirit-land!" exclaimed the chief. "Other braves, too, no less skillful in hunting than he, are departed. Who will dare to tell their squaws when we return from the war-path, and not be able to show them scalps, to show you fought like warriors? Who shall dress the skins of the beaver, and cut them wood to warm their lodges in winter? None!"

He took his seat, amid fierce yells from the savages, whose anger his words had stirred up. The prisoner, who knew not what had been said, as he was, of course, unacquainted with the Ojibwah tongue, was at a loss how to account for this strange outbreak, but he knew that it must relate to himself in some manner.

When the savages had become again somewhat quieted, the tall form of Rollins rose.

"Warriors of the Ojibwahs, lend me your ears! You know me! I am Ashka—the 'White Serpent.' My skin is white, but I am wedded to a daughter of your race, and am your brother!" He spoke in English.

"We know it! We know it," were the exclamations that greeted his words.

"And," the villain continued, "this is one of the pale-faces who has turned the 'lodges of the Ojibwahs into mourning. He is here! What shall be his fate? Not the knife, for that is easy; not the tomahawk, that is too quick."

As one man, the demons rose to their feet, and with hoarse yells, proclaimed the manner of his torture.

Montbleu was seized and dragged back into the shade of the bushes, guarded by twenty savages. His breast was the theater of many conflicting emotions, not the least consoling of which was the fact that he was doomed to die at the stake, at sunrise on the morrow.

CHAPTER XI.

THE TELL-TALE BULLET.

It is now time that we turn our attention to an individual whom the reader is supposed not to have forgotten, and whom we introduced in the opening chapter of our story—Salvarez. This wily desperado, since the compact with the Ojibwahs, had followed the footsteps of the chief whose life he had pledged himself to take with an energy capable of being sustained only by some strong motive. Red-Ax never suspect-

ing that an enemy like Salvarez was upon his track, had very nearly paid the penalty of his ignorance of the fact by his life—one of the occasions being the day when, in the company of Montbleu and Elk-horn Bill, he had been shot at by the bullet which, the reader will remember, the trapper dug from the tree.

On the afternoon of the day mentioned in the preceding chapter, before the news of the brush with savages, and the subsequent capture, had time to reach the settlement, Salvarez astonished the inhabitants somewhat by his unexpected appearance among them, his visits to the village being a rather rare circumstance.

But as he had been wary enough to never give them any cause of complaint against him, he was allowed the free run of the fort when in the settlement, one of the rooms of which he used for a sleeping apartment.

On the afternoon of which we speak, after exchanging a few words with such of the villagers as chose to address him, he proceeded immediately to the apartment we have mentioned, closing and bolting its door after him. Then, throwing down a bag which had been slung over his shoulders, and laying aside his rifle, he took his stand at a small loop-hole, which commanded a full view of the clearing.

With a patience the life he followed had taught him, he sustained his position until the sun was on the verge of descending below the horizon. Then, on a sudden, a gratified expression crossed his face, and putting his mouth close to the loop-hole, he called out, just loud enough to be heard by a person outside the stockade:

"Kini-ki-nik!"

A moment later, the old Indian showed his face inside the stockade, and Salvarez repeated his call. The old fellow seemed to know whence the sound came, for he immediately walked toward the fort, and entered it. Salvarez heard his footsteps sound along the passage-way, and he unbolted and opened the door of his room. It was evident the Indian had just returned from one of his expeditions to the woods, for he carried under his arm a bundle of old willow, which was eventually to be manufactured into his everlasting Kini-ki-nik.

Throwing his burden upon the floor, and leaning upon a

stick he carried, he waited to hear what Salvarez had to say to him.

"Kini-ki-nik," said the other, holding up the bullet-pouch suspended from his shoulder, "you see that this is empty. I must have some more bullets."

"Ugh! Want fire?"

"Yes. Listen. To-night, as soon as it is dark, bring plenty of dry bark to the cellar, and let no one see you. Do you understand?"

"Ugh. Yes."

"Very well. Here—this to pay you for your trouble."

With these words, Salvarez handed the other a small silver coin, which, after being duly examined by the old fellow, was deposited in one of his pockets. Then, gathering up his willows, he made his exit, while Salvarez kept his room until it should become dark.

When a glance through the loop-hole showed him that the last ray of light was struggling for existence, he seized the bag he had thrown on the floor, and with the least noise possible, quitted the room. Stealing along the passage-way, his foot kicked against an iron ring fastened to a trap-door. Stooping down, he raised this door, and, after listening for a moment, he disappeared in the aperture, letting down the door after him.

He now found himself in a high but narrow passage, whose further outlet was some distance in the forest, and concealed by a contrivance known only to one or two of the settlers. The importance of this subterranean passage, in case the fort was besieged, will be seen at once.

Salvarez advanced for some distance into this, when the passage suddenly widened out to treble its ordinary width. Here he stopped; and throwing down his bag, awaited the coming of the old Indian.

"Well," the man muttered to himself, "if that old skunk is careful, they won't be apt to pounce down upon me here. If it hadn't been for that bullet I wasted the other day, I need not have taken all this trouble."

The bullet the man had reference to was the one Elk-horn Bill dug from the oak, and which was now in safe keeping in the trapper's pocket.

It seemed an age to Salvarez, but, at last, the soft tread of the Indian was heard coming toward him. A few seconds later, and he was close to the spot where Salvarez stood.

"Well," asked the latter, "you are quite sure no one saw you, Kini-ni-nik?"

"Ugh! No."

But in this the old fellow was mistaken. He *had* been seen, and by a person whom Salvarez would not have exactly cared about meeting just then.

Throwing down an armful of bark he had brought with him, the Indian produced a flint and steel, and by dint of this and hard working, the bark was soon ignited. Guided in his movements by its light, Salvarez now produced from his bag a small iron dish, a bullet-mold, and several pewter spoons. Bending one of the spoons double, he threw it in the dish, which was placed over the fire. The heat soon caused the softer metal to melt, and when it was to Salvarez's liking, he produced a pair of pincers from the bag, and with them seized the dish, while Kini-ki-nik held in readiness the mold. Salvarez poured into this as much of the molten liquid as was necessary, and a moment later the missile dropped to the ground, perfect and shining.

This process was repeated until all of the material had been melted, and was lying in a little heap of bullets. Then, taking the dish from the fire, in order to allow it time to cool, he proceeded to place the bullets in his pouch. By the time this was done, the iron dish had cooled off, and was placed, with the other articles, in the bag.

Grouping their way along the passage, they soon found themselves in close proximity to the trap door.

"See if the coast is clear," said Salvarez to his companion, in a whisper.

The Indian pushed up the door, and, hearing nothing, informed Salvarez of the fact.

The latter reached the passage, and closed the trap-door; but no sooner had he done so, than the door of the room he had occupied that afternoon was flung open, and, by the light of a torch that one of them held, Salvarez recognized the forms of a dozen men.

For a few seconds the man gazed at the assemblage in

blank amazement. Then he singled out the form of Elkhorn Bill among them, and his face turned ashy pale.

The trapper was the first who spoke.

"What means this?" he demanded, in a loud tone.

"Have I done any thing wrong? When your bullet-pouch is empty, do you commit a crime by filling it?"

"Ha! Then you have been molding bullets. But why in darkness, seein' thur's plenty o' room whar thur's plenty o' light? As for me, I've lived in these woods for thirty years, an' never saw a bullet that war cast in the dark yit. Let me see one."

With these words, the trapper elbowed himself out of the crowd, and appeared close to Salvarez, who, knowing it would be useless to disobey, pulled the stopper from his pouch, and produced one of the bullets.

The trapper received it, and by the light of the torch, closely scrutinized it. Then, holding it up before the crowd, he said:

"Hyur's a bullet that looks like lead, but 'tain't. See if any o' ye kin tell what it air."

One of the villagers, an old man, took the missile in his hand, examined it, and gave in his opinion that it was pewter.

"That's what the young feller said—he as war captured by the reds this arternoon."

There was not one of those present who did not know why the trapper was so curious to ascertain the real composition of that bullet—not one who had not heard of the attempted assassination of their friend, Red-Ax.

Placing his hand in his pocket, and producing therefrom a misshapen piece of metal, he demanded of Salvarez, in a voice of thunder:

"Varmint! Do ye know that bullet?"

He addressed answered, but it did not need that to proclaim his guilt. His downcast head, his pallid countenance, the nervous twitchings of his face was evidence enough.

"He is guilty. Red-Ax shall punish him, not us. Bind him hand and foot, and keep him till to-morrow. To-night we have work enough."

Tethers were procured, and with them the villain was secured. Then, being cast in a room, he was left to his own bitter reflections.

CHAPTER XII.

A FEARFUL CONFLICT.

Without waiting to see the execution of his order, Elk-horn Bill left the fort, and immediately outside the stockade, he found himself in the presence of something over a score of hunters and trappers, armed *cap-a-pie*, and, like himself, of resolute mien.

"The canoes—"

"All ready, hoss."

"Quick, then, kumrades, quick! I war delayed by settlin' the hash, till to-morrow, of as miserable a varmint, with a white skin, as walks the airth—'ceptin' thet Rollins. Bu'st my b'iler if I do know which o' them *is* the meanest."

Hurrying down to the river, the party embarked in three good-sized canoes, and pushed out into the darkness and the storm, for the hurricane which had overtaken Montbleu and his captors had not yet spent its force. At intervals, lurid lightning lit up the scene, and the rain was hurled in their faces with a force that nearly blinded them But after crossing to the opposite side, and keeping the canoe well within the protection of the bank, the force of the storm was less experienced.

"Wagh! It's a wild night, kumrades, an' a fittin' one fo. Satan hisself to be abroad; but it'll answer our purpose better'n a moonlight one, I reckon," said Elk-horn Bill. "Dip your paddles easy, boys, for the red-skins may have spies abroad, an' a careless splash could be heard, for all the thunder."

To ordinary men, the task of paddling against wind and current, would have been a difficult and fatiguing one, indeed; but those were men whose iron sinews knew not what

it was to tire, inured, as they were from their youth, to all the hardships of a pioneer life.

Something after two hours from the time they had left the settlement, Elk-horn Bill, raising his voice, imitated the cry of an owl. Resting for a moment on their paddles, the party kept a sharp look-out, both up and down the stream, but nothing except the grim forest met their gaze.

"He must be further up, comrades," said one of the band.

"Yes. We can't hev passed him," said another.

Half a mile or more further up the stream, the cry of the owl was repeated, and this time with more success, for before the noise had fairly died away, a sudden flash of light was seen, a short distance in front of them. The flash was not unlike that emitted by the fire-fly, with the exception that it was larger in volume.

Keeping their eyes fixed as nearly as possible upon the spot whence the light had appeared, the men resumed their paddling.

A low exclamation from some one on the bank reached their ears, and the canoe containing Elk-horn Bill was headed ashore. A tall form stepped forward to meet it, and when the craft touched the bank, he quickly and quietly took his seat inside it. It was the avenger, Red-Ax.

"Wal, chief, ye follered the skunks?" inquired Elk-horn Bill as they resumed their course.

The Indian answered in the affirmative.

"Wal, how much further hev we to go?"

"About two miles from here," answered Red-Ax, "a creek empties into the river. The Ojibwahs are encamped upon its bank."

"Good. How many o' them did ye count?"

"As they are upon the war-path, their number is large. Red-Ax thinks they number over a hundred."

"Ther number is large, I'll allow, but the odds won't be so great as some o' the tussles I've been in, in the course o' my experience. But the young feller—thar prisoner?"

"He is doomed to die in the morning."

For a time nothing more was said, the trappers giving their whole attention to the careful management of their canoes, for they were rapidly approaching their foes.

Suddenly, however, one of the men said, in a voice just loud enough to be heard above the wind:

"Bill, I hear the 'wash' of the crik."

"Quick, then!" replied the trapper addressed; "run the canoes ashore.

The order was executed with the utmost dispatch, and the men as speedily debarked.

We will pass over the events which transpired for the next twenty minutes, and proceed to relate the position the band occupied when ready to begin the attack. They were standing on the bed of the creek, the water of which reached up to their knees, and from where they had a full view of the enemy just before them. Thick and tall rushes surrounded them, forming a canopy which the savages would fail to pierce with their eyes. Some twenty feet to the rear of the trappers, were growing several large oaks; and, in conformity with the plan of Red-Ax, three of the trappers ascended as many of these trees, and stationed themselves firmly on the huge limbs.

But before the attack began, one thing was highly important, and that was, to separate Montbleu from his captors. This was to be undertaken by Red-Ax.

Leaving behind him his rifle, and placing the haft of his knife in his teeth, so as to be ready for immediate use, the chief crept softly toward the spot where he had seen the prisoner placed. When near enough, he was on the point of stretching forth his hand to awaken the young man, who was sound asleep, when one of those whose duty it was to guard him rose to a sitting posture, his visage wearing a look of suspicion. He was so near that Red-Ax could have stabbed him in the back of the neck; but, being powerfully built, the chief knew he would not yield his life without a struggle, and he restrained himself and waited.

Hearing nothing, the savage soon lay down again, and when his breathing informed the chief that he was asleep, he touched the captive lightly on the face. Montbleu awoke without a motion, and at the same moment feeling a knife severing the tethers of buck-skin that bound him, he knew in an instant that help was at hand.

He was free; and rising gently to his feet, the hand of

Red-Ax grasped his arm, and he was led gently from the spot toward the creek. And so adroitly had all this been executed, that not a single savage awoke; and had the trappers felt so disposed, they could have retired as easily as they had come. But they had no such intention. If they did not fight the foe now, they would soon have to do so at the settlement, whither, it was plainly evident, the band was bound.

No sooner was the young man beside them, than the trappers in the creek, at a signal from Red-Ax, drew forth a pistol each—a weapon every man of them carried—and aimed at one of the savages, each picking out his man. Simultaneously, their reports sounded above the warring of the elements, and those of the savages who had been unharmed by the shots sprung to their feet with a yell. The Ojibwah war-cry pealed from fifty throats, and for a moment they stood as if petrified.

In accordance with the instructions of Red-Ax, the three trappers who had ascended the trees, one after the other, fired their pieces toward the foe, and as many of the savages rolled to the ground. The remainder saw whence the shots came, and dropping to the ground, they commenced crawling toward the trees, doubtless supposing their assailants had taken to the forest for refuge.

Peering through their canopy of rushes, and aided by the fire, the trappers saw their movements. Forward the dusky forms crawled, until they were on the very bank of the creek. The moment had come.

A score of rifles belched forth, twenty flashes blended in one lit up the scene, and with a fearful yell the demons fell back, leaving the bank of the creek lined with their dead. Had an earthquake opened at their feet, they could not have exhibited more surprise and terror.

Supposing their enemies were to be counted by the shots from the trees, they had advanced boldly, not a bow being bent to return the fearful greeting that had made them cognizant of the presence of so large a number of their foes.

But though so terribly crippled, the savages were not yet vanquished. Collecting together their strength, they rushed in a body toward the creek, tomahawks raised and ready to strike.

The sagacity of the trappers had foreseen this, and they had improved the dismay their shots had made by climbing up the steep bank of the creek, and lying on their faces beside it. Here they loaded their rifles, but scarcely was the process completed, when they beheld the enemy coming toward them, as already described.

Supposing the trappers to be still within the rushes, the savages hesitated not a moment, but rushed at once into the creek. Here again they were held in check, for, instead of the foe they had expected to instantly grapple with, nothing but the thick barrier of rushes opposed their progress.

But their surprise was of short duration. Again did the deadly rifles ring forth, and once more did the savages in the creek recoil. This time, however, the volley failed somewhat in its execution, as the savages were hidden by the rushes, and the trappers fired at random. Recovering from the shock, the savages commence to crawl up the bank to the level ground. Tall forms rise up from above them, and as they reach the top of the bank, a blow from a clubbed rifle knocks them backward into the stream, lifeless. Those in the rear still struggle on, but, becoming entangled by the weeds, and hindered by those who, each moment, come falling lifeless against them, their progress is slow.

At length, a score or more succeed in evading the blows dealt at them, and reach the level ground. With their fearful tomahawks, and filled with the energy of despair, they fight like demons. A few of the trappers are sent to their last account, and then the battle suddenly becomes hushed. The remaining savages have disappeared in the bushes, and a wild hurrah from the trappers announces that the victory is theirs.

"Boyees," said Elk-horn Bill, when the fray was over, and he was employed in charging his rifle, "we've licked the varmints, an' given 'em a lesson they well needed. But thur's one thing we failed to do, and thet war, to kill thet skunk Rollins. Wagh! the coward never showed hisself in the fight at all. But never mind. 'Retribution,' as the savin' is, 'is sometimes tardy, but it is sure to come at last.'"

CHAPTER XIII.

A DEED OF BLOOD.

THE departure of the band of trappers from St. John had been seen, and that, too, by a person who watched their departure with no small amount of satisfaction. The individual in question was an Indian, a tall, powerfully-built man, whose strength of arm—equaled only by that of the well-known Red-Ax—had earned him, among his tribe, the *sobriquet* of "Hickory-Arm."

The savage, concealed in a thicket of hazel-bushes, had been on watch the entire afternoon, but no chance had been offered him to put into execution the object that had brought him thither. However, when darkness came, and he saw the band of men leave the settlement, the coast was clear, and he immediately stepped forth from his place of concealment.

Boldly entering the clearing—for the darkness would prevent his being easily seen—he made his way toward one of the cabins, situated somewhat nearer the center of the clearing than the others, and belonging to M. Rockville, the father of our heroine, Maud.

A light which threw its dim rays through the cabin window, proclaimed that the persons within were still astir; and after ascertaining that he was unobserved, the Indian peered through the window, with a view of seeing his ground before entering on it. Appearing satisfied, he turned away, and, drawing his blanket tighter around him, he walked toward the cabin door.

But before he had time to reach it, a figure suddenly confronted him, but whose appearance gave the savage no reason for feeling uneasy. It was Old Kini-ki-nik.

Grasping the old fellow by the arm, before he had time to speak, Hickory-Arm led him some distance from the cabin.

"Kini-ki-nik," he then said, in his native tongue, "you had better return to your lodge. A hundred of our warriors are on their way to the settlement now."

"Ugh! No, not yet," returned the old fellow. "A pale-face is a prisoner, and he has given me money to get him a knife."

On hearing this, Hickory-Arm gave an ejaculation of surprise.

"Who is the pale-face you speak of?" he asked.

Kini-ki-nik gave the name of the prisoner, and again the savage might have been seen to start.

"He wants a knife, you say, Kini-ki-nik. He shall have one. You stop here."

With these words, Hickory-Arm turned on his heel, and, with stealthy tread, approached the fort. When close to the stockade, he humped up his shoulders, and imitated as closely as possible the step of old Kini-ki-nik.

The ruse succeeded, for the sentry allowed him to pass inside without a second look. A few seconds later, he was inside the fort. Entering the passage-way, he was hailed by the hunter keeping guard of the room in which Salvarez had been confined.

"Ugh! me," the savage said, imitating the voice of him whose character he had assumed.

"Well, who's 'me'—Kini-ki-nik?"

"Yes," was the reply, he who uttered it drawing near the hunter, who, not feeling at his ease, bade the Indian leave the fort. But it was too late.

Drawing a knife from his girdle, the savage sprung forward with the quickness and dexterity of a cat, burying the knife to its hilt in the trapper's chest, at the same instant clutching the unfortunate man by the throat, in order to prevent his giving any alarm.

The hunter sunk to the floor. Drawing forth his weapon the exultant savage wiped it on the fallen man's hunting-shirt, returned it to its place in his girdle. Once he hesitated, for he wished to obtain the scalp of the hunter; but his caution served to restrain him, and pushing open the door of the nearest room, he entered.

"Salvarez!" he called.

"Ha! Kini-ki-nik?" was the response.

"No, me—Hickory-Arm," returned the savage, passing up to where the man lay bound. Then, pulling forth his knife

again, he quickly severed the thongs that bound the prisoner. No sooner was this done, than he rose to his feet.

A few hurried words of explanation ensued, and then the two quitted the fort, Salvarez having first taken possession of the dead hunter's rifle. Approaching the gate of the stockade, owing to the storm, their coming was unheard by the sentry, whose first intimation of their presence was, a blow upon the head with the stock of a rifle, which laid him senseless upon the ground. Passing quickly through the gateway. Hickory-Arm, leaving Salvarez to pursue whatever course he liked best, turned his attention once more to the object that had brought him thither.

The light in the cabin of M. Rockville had not yet been extinguished. Guided by it in making his way to the cabin, the Indian soon found himself standing close to the door, which, after listening intently for a few seconds, he opened, and passed inside.

The apartment into which the savage so unceremoniously ushered himself contained three persons—M. Rockville, his wife and Maud. The latter has already made the acquaintance of our readers. The former was a somewhat elderly gentleman, of an extremely intelligent mien, and garbed in a plain, homespun suit. His wife was one or two years his junior, kind and benevolent-looking, and was engaged in knitting, and listening to her husband, who was reading aloud from his favorite "Gil Blas." As for Maud, her thoughts were neither on her mother's knitting, nor with her father's reading. She was thinking of an absent one, and this not without pain, as the troubled expression on her countenance showed! Yes, she was thinking of Henry Montbleu, who, she had heard, had been taken captive by the fierce Ojibwahs.

Many of the terrible stories she had heard of their cruelty rose up in her memory, and inwardly she breathed a prayer to her Maker that *his* life might be spared.

The sudden opening of the door caused the three to look round simultaneously. The scowling visage of the savage was before them.

Maud slightly screamed at the sudden apparition; her mother dropped her knitting, while M. Rockville, laying his

book face down, upon the table, asked the Indian in a pleasant voice what was the object of his visit.

"The 'White-haired Chief' is wanted at the fort," answered the savage, calling M. Rockville by the sobriquet by which he was known among his tribe

"At the fort. Have the trappers, then, who left some time ago, returned?"

"Hickory-Arm knows not."

"What, then, am I wanted for?"

"The pale-faces had a prisoner. He is gone."

"Escaped!" exclaimed M. Rockville, rising suddenly to his feet. "Then I shall be needed at the fort. Salvarez is a desperate fellow, and, depend on it, he has not left without—"

He was interrupted at that instant by the crack of a rifle, fired by the sentinel at the stockade gate, and who had just recovered his scattered senses.

"Husband—father, do not go," exclaimed both the females.

"Yes, I must go, when duty calls me. Do not be alarmed. The fort is not far distant, and I shall soon return. Hark! There goes another shot. I must—"

"But this Indian, father. I don't like his looks. He may be friendly, but oh! how terrible he looks," said Maud, in a whisper.

"Never judge from appearances, child," replied the old man, placing his hat upon his head, and stepping toward the door.

During this, the savage had been a silent spectator of the scene, a look of unfathomable fierceness settled upon his grim features, as he witnessed the parting between father, wife and daughter. Any other but a savage breast might have been touched, but not a chord within him was the least disturbed at it.

The Indian opened the door, and the two passed out

But scarcely had they left the cabin a dozen yards behind them, when the savage placed his hand beneath his blanket, and sought for the haft of his knife. Another instant, and the instrument was drawn forth. This was the last moment of M. Rockville's life. Clenching his teeth as one in a pas-

sion, the demon sprung back, as if to give himself more room for the blow, and then, not quicker is the lightning's flash, than was the descent of his arm, burying the knife into the old man's side.

"*Mon Dieu! ma femme—ma fille!*" exclaimed the victim, in the language of his childhood, as he sunk to the earth. But, before he could utter more, the hand of the assassin was over his mouth, and he died without ever pronouncing another word.

No sooner was this bloody deed done, than the savage turned once more toward the cabin.

The Indian pushed open the door, and entered.

"Father! Where is he?" inquired Maud, as her eye lit upon the savage.

"The pale-face maiden is like the star of morning," was the Indian's answer.

"Leave us! Leave us!" exclaimed the old woman, thoroughly aroused.

"Why do you fear me?" exclaimed the Ojibwah. "Is it because I am large and great? But why should you fear me for that? Do you dread the panther any more than the crawling rattlesnake?"

There was no answer, and he continued:

"You asked me for the White-haired Chief. Maiden"—pulling forth the bloody knife—"behold this! *It is the blood of him for whom you asked!*"

Two wild shrieks echoed, and two forms sunk fainting to the floor. For a moment the Ojibwah stands there, a silent spectator of the scene his words have produced. But the cry of some one in the fort reaches his ears, and he lingers there no longer. Seizing the fair form of Maud Rockville in his arms, he opens the door of the cabin, and passes outside, into the darkness and the storm. The shrieks of the females have been heard, and footsteps are running toward the cabin; but, in less than a minute after seizing the young girl, the savage is in the forest.

CHAPTER XIV.

A NIGHT OF HORRORS.

HARDLY had the Ojibwah reached the woods, when a figure sprung from behind the very bush which had concealed Hickory-Arm that afternoon, and confronted him. Mechanically, the hand of the Indian sought his tomahawk, while he sustained his burden with the other arm.

The figure was that of Salvarez.

"Well, who's that you've got, Hickory-Arm?" asked the villain.

"The daughter of the White-haired Chief," was the sullen answer, for the Indian was far from being pleased at the meeting.

"Ha! Miss Maud! Well, where do you intend to take her to? Not to your lodge?"

"Hickory-Arm has squaws enough. He is to take her to the lodge of our pale-face brother, Rollins."

"All right. I'll follow, as Rollins is a particular friend of mine. Lead the way, quick! for by their shouts, those in the settlement must have got the alarm."

The two set off as fast as the darkness would allow, the stalwart Indian bearing the young girl as if she had been but a feather in weight.

Before long, she came back to consciousness, and struggled to free herself.

The savage halted, and placed her on her feet, at the same time admonishing her what the consequences would be if she made any outcry. Then, clutching hold of her hand, he led her forward.

In less than an hour they reached the spot which had been the scene of the conflict between the savages, Elk-horn Bill, Red-Ax and young Montbleu.

Guided by the savage, Salvarez and the young girl soon found themselves in the cave by which, our readers will rec-

haps remember, Red-Ax and his friends made their escape so easily from the savages.

When the narrow passage ended, and the three found themselves in a huge cavern, the savage released the girl's hand, and began to displace a heap of dry brushwood that lay close to the wall of the cavern. When this was done, and had it been day, an aperture some three feet high, by as many broad, would have been revealed. As it was, Hickory-Arm gave the girl the directions he expected her to follow, then led her close to the aperture, bade her go upon her knees, and enter. Trembling for her life, she did so, Salvarez closely following; and as soon as he had returned the brush to its place, the Ojibwah followed their example.

After sustaining this painful position until some hundred or more feet had been passed over, and her hands were cut by the sharp rocks, her ears were suddenly assailed by the sound of rushing water.

"Oh! I can not go on," she said. "Let us go back. Do you not hear that fearful noise?"

But her stern captor, with a horrible threat, bade her go on.

Inwardly breathing a prayer to her Maker, she again crawled forward, and almost immediately afterward found herself upon a narrow ledge of solid rock. A few feet below a stream of seething water leaped forward, seemingly shaking the rocks to their very foundation with its power. Suddenly she felt a jerk of her dress from behind. Heavens! Did her captor intend to hurl her into the rapids? Oh, God! It was a horrible moment—a moment she never forgot! She attempted to crawl forward, but her garment was held fast.

"Well, why don't you go on?" asked Salvarez, in a savage tone.

"Release my dress, and I will," she answered, faintly.

"I! I am not touching you," he returned.

Hearing this, she felt along her dress, and found to her no small joy, that a piece of braid had become loosened, and had been caught by a projecting piece of rock. She quickly released herself, and once again made her way along the narrow and dangerous ledge.

A few yards more, and this ended in a spacious cavern.

"Now then," said the Ojibwah, "the white maiden must stop here."

Saying this, the savage turned to leave the cavern by another opening; and Salvarez, passing up to the young girl, said in a low voice:

"Don't be alarmed. You shall soon be free."

He immediately turned on his heel, and, with the Ojibwah, quitted the cavern.

Ascending a rude wooden staircase, they emerged into another subterranean passage. Following this, it led them into a large-sized apartment—the cabin of Rollins.

When they found themselves in the apartment, it contained no one save themselves; but a moment or two later, the door of the room was opened, and by a lighted candle she held in her hand, the two recognized the Indian wife of Rollins. She advanced, placed the light upon the table, and stood with folded arms, as if expecting some order.

"Let Mar-et-sheea leave us. We must rest," said the Indian, in Ojibwah.

Obedient to the order, the woman turned, and left the room.

Urged by a strong curiosity to see what was going on, she went outside the cabin, and stationed herself near a window that looked out from the room in which were the two men, and where she could watch their every movement.

In the mean time Salvarez pulled from his pocket a small flask, from which, after removing the stopper, he swallowed a mouthful of the contents. Then pulling it suddenly from his lips, as if something had startled him, he exclaimed:

"Hark!"

The Indian listened, and fancying that he heard something which ought to be investigated, he left the room. This was exactly what Salvarez desired; and quickly pulling from his pocket a small vial of colorless liquid, he emptied half its contents into the flask of brandy. It was nitric acid.

A few moments later, the Indian returned. Being fond of drink, and seeing the flask upon the table, he seized it, and swallowed half its contents.

"Ugh!" he said, making a wry face. "The fire-water is sour."

Salvarez made no reply, his hand uneasily playing with the handle of his knife. The savage seated himself in a chair, a short distance from Salvarez, but scarcely had he done so, when he passed his hand first to his throat, then to his stomach. This he repeated, and then a groan of anguish escaped him. The poison was consuming his very vitals. He bore the agonizing pain for a few moments longer, the leaped to his feet, his eyes rolling in a manner beyond description. The truth seemed to flash upon him, and with a yell of combined rage and anguish, he sprung toward Salvarez. The latter was ready, and, pulling forth his knife, he buried it in the savage's throat.

Even this was insufficient to prostrate the savage, who tottered toward the villain, and endeavored to grasp him. But Salvarez was again too quick for him, and disappeared through the door which led to the cavern in which had been left the captive girl.

Quickly making his way along the dark passage, and down the rude stairs, he soon found himself in the presence of her he sought.

"Come," he said to the young girl, "the Indian is dead. Let us be gone before it is light."

Not caring with whom she went, so long as she quitted the fearful place she was in, she obeyed with alacrity. Following close in the rear of Salvarez, she soon found herself above the ground, and in the apartment already mentioned.

The Ojibwah was lying upon the floor, dead, and in a pool of blood. Her heart turned sick at the ghastly sight, but at heart she felt thankful that her enemy could do her no more harm.

Hurried away from the cabin by Salvarez, the young girl found herself once more in the darkness. But this was far preferable to the Egyptian darkness of the cave, and her heart felt lighter than it had done since leaving the settlement. Instead of taking the path that led to the settlement, the villain directed their course toward the river, heading for a point well known to him, and which was reached after an hour's walk. Bidding his companion remain where she was, Salvarez directed his course toward a clump of willows, from where he drew forth a canoe.

At his request, the young girl took her seat in the vessel, which was pushed from the shore.

"Are we not going to the settlement?" asked she, perceiving that the canoe was not headed down the stream.

"No, not yet. I am taking you to my home."

Here we will leave them, and return to the cabin of Rollins, in order to see what further transpired there on that memorable night.

The Indian woman had been a silent spectator of the scene of the death of the Ojibwah, and the subsequent departure of Salvarez, the murderer.

The latter had no sooner disappeared, than the squaw entered the room where the savage was lying dead upon the floor, and took down from the wall a curiously carved drinking horn, the contents of which she poured out upon the floor, and emptied in their place the liquid in Salvarez's flask. She then hung the horn in its place again, and hid the flask from sight; then, unmindful of the ghastly spectacle at the other end of the room, she lay down on the cabin floor, and slept.

An hour must have passed away, when she was startled by a footstep. She rose at once to her feet, and at the same time the door of the room was opened, and Rollins entered. His garments were covered with mud, his face wore a troubled expression, and his manner was hurried and agitated.

To the woman's surprise, the prostrate form of the savage at the other end of the room escaped his notice.

"Mar-et-sheea," he said to her in Ojibwah, "we must go. To-night nearly a hundred of your tribe have been slain, and in the morning Red-Ax and his hell-hounds will be upon my track."

With these words he took down the drinking-horn, and wallowed a huge draught of its contents. He returned it to its place, and immediately quitted the cabin. He walked rapidly to the spot where he had buried what money he possessed, and turned over the stone that marked the spot. To his horror, his treasure was gone—and at the same instant that he made this discovery a spasm shot across his stomach.

Rising to his feet, he rushed toward the cabin. He entered it and called for the Indian woman. She had disappeared, and no voice answered him. He turned, and, for the first

time, his gaze fell upon the ghastly form of the Ojibwah, a sight which chilled his very blood, notwithstanding the dreadful burning within him.

Again he shouted for his wife, but only the wail of the wind, as it swept round the corner of the cabin, answered him.

The truth flashed upon him. He was dying, and alone. Drops of perspiration started from his forehead, and he clenched his teeth like a hyena in his agony. Here we draw the vail.

But when the next morning came, and the sun streamed in through the cabin window, Mar-et-sheea glided silently into the room. Her husband was lying on the floor. She approached, and touched his face—cold as ice.

Rollins was no more.

CHAPTER XV.

RETRIBUTION.

We will return to the trappers.

Hardly had the terrible conflict ceased, before the clouds broke, and the pale moon covered the scene in her silvery light.

Weary now that the excitement had passed, they found their canoes, and embarked. As their course lay down the stream, severe exertion was unnecessary, an occasional stroke of the paddles being sufficient to guide and keep the canoe in motion.

The hearts of the men beat high, for, in the whole of the dreadful struggle, but three of the hunters had suffered any mishap. The worst misfortune that had happened was to a young hunter, who had received a painful wound in the shoulder with a tomahawk, but, it was not mortal. Moreover, being cheered with the bright rays of the moon, and knowing that they had nothing to fear, the party broke out in a song.

The song was ended, but scarcely had its strains ceased to

echo over the water, when an exclamation from one of the trappers caused their thoughts to turn in another direction.

"What is it, hoss?"

"A canoe."

"A canoe! Whar?"

"Jest down the stream. Squint yonderways—jest between the other shore an' thet island in the middle o' the stream."

Gazing in the direction the trapper had indicated, the trappers at once beheld the canoe, and in exactly the spot mentioned.

"What kin they be?" was the query that now went the rounds.

"Injins, mebbe," was one of the answers.

"No. The feller as paddles don't use it as handily as a red-skin. Ye see, he kind o' sends the blade through the water with a jerk; whereas, a red-skin allers gives a steady stroke, no matter how fast he paddles."

"This was spoken by Elk-horn Bill.

A moment later, his supposition was confirmed by Red-Ax.

"Ugh!" he said. "They are pale-faces—one man, one squaw."

"A woman! Geehosephat! What kin she be doin' hyur, at this time o' night? Depend on it, kumrades, thar's a something in the wind."

Hitherto, the canoes had been kept in motion by a single man in the stern of each, but now the other paddles were seized, and the craft was soon dashing at a brisk rate down the stream.

The distance from them to the other canoe was but short—not over two hundred rods.

It was plainly evident that the other canoe was being headed directly for the island—a spot of circular shape, and covered over with willows and sumach.

The moment the man discovered that the trappers were endeavoring to overtake him, he doubled his exertions. He was about half-way between the shore and the island, and was not long in discovering that the superior speed of the trappers would enable them to reach the spot in advance of him. So, describing the arc of a circle with his paddle, he headed the canoe for the shore.

Of course, this movement was not without its due effect upon the pursuers. They saw that the man was endeavoring to evade a meeting with them, a circumstance more than sufficient to strongly excite their suspicions; and low murmurs of surprise and curiosity were to be heard.

"Keep on—keep on!" exclaimed Elk-horn Bill. "Don't make a show o' follerin' 'em. They kin reach the shore afore us, an' then take to the woods. Listen. It's plain they want to come to the island. Well, one or two o' us kin ha t thur, while we drop down the stream. In an hour we'll come back, an' ef they've visited the island, why, we kin count on 'em bein' safe in hand, if necessary."

Singular as the trapper's words may seem, they were sufficiently explicit for his companions, who divined his plan at once.

Arriving at the island, without staying the progress of the canoes, Red-Ax and Montbleu—at his earnest desire dropped softly into the water, and swam rapidly to the island. Crawling up on the bank, they secreted themselves in a huge clump of willows. The trappers kept on, and in a short time disappeared round a projecting point, some distance below the island.

Seeing that he was not pursued, the individual who had headed for the shore, on the approach of the trappers, again changed his tactics, and once more headed for the island. He did this, however, with some caution, ever and anon resting on his paddle, and gazing earnestly down the river, as if fearing the trappers might return.

But, by degrees, these fears appeared to vanish, and at last he paddled steadily toward his destination.

Young Montbleu was on thorns for their approach. He knew not why, but from the first moment his eyes had fallen upon the female in the canoe, a deep shade of anxiety had crossed his mind, and he watched the approach of the canoe with intense satisfaction.

At last, the canoe drew within the shadow of the bushes, and its bow touched the island. He in the bow jumped ashore, and in a gruff tone bade his companion do likewise. Reluctantly she obeyed, and as she did so, the rays of the moon fell full upon her face

Those features Montbleu recognized on the instant. *It was the face of Maud Rockville.*

The discovery startled him. What did it mean? Why was Maud Rockville in such a situation? Had she come here at her own accord, or otherwise?

Salvarez—for he it was—drew the canoe well up on the island, then directed his gaze once more down the river. Seeing nothing to excite his apprehensions, he then turned his attention toward the young girl.

"Maud," he said, "we are at my home. Even on this island is a spot where, when the sun is at its hight in the heavens, the most cunning savage can not find me. I am alone, and you must be my wife."

"Never! Never!" she exclaimed.

"You say never, Maud! Ha! ha! Who is there to save you?"

"God! I know of none else," she answered, calmly.

"God! We shall see."

With these words he grasped her by the arm, but she as quickly released herself. At that instant her gaze happened to be directed down the river. A sight met her eyes which at once served to somewhat allay her fears on the instant.

"Oh, God!" she breathed, "but give me time."

As if actuated by a sudden impulse, Salvarez also directed his glance down the river. In an instant his eye fell upon three dark objects—*the returning canoes of his pursuers.*

"There!" exclaimed the captive. "Did I not tell you that God would save me?"

"Not yet!" he exclaimed, in a hoarse voice. "I have yet time to escape."

Pulling forth his knife he approached her, and grasped her fiercely by the arm.

"Again do I ask you, will you consent to become my wife? Quick! I give you but a moment to decide between me and the knife! Answer!"

These were the last words he ever addressed to Maud Rockville. Like a tiger, Red-Ax, the avenger, sprung forth from his covert of willows, and stretched the villain at his feet with a blow of his clenched hand. He was quickly followed by Henry Montbleu, and by a sudden impulse, both

he and Maud flung themselves in each other's arms. This was a premature *denouement* of their hitherto unspoken love, but none the less a happy one.

So heavy had been the blow dealt him, that Salvarez did not recover from the effects until the trappers had reached the island. When he did recover, he found himself in the midst of a circle of men whose mien gave him no hope for escape. He knew he was a doomed man.

The trappers were, of course, yet unacquainted with the fearful scene that had been enacted at the fort since their departure from it, but what they did know of the man was sufficient, according to the code of Judge Lynch, to forfeit his life.

He was sentenced to die on the spot, and at once.

Placing the young girl where she would not be a spectator of the scene, the men at once prepared to carry the sentence into execution.

Raising his rifle, one of the trappers fired. The shot took effect in the villain's side, but not mortally. Screaming with fear and agony, Salvarez fell upon his knees, and begged in piteous terms for mercy, the blood streaming down from the wound. Oh, it was a horrible sight!

But he begged in vain. Another shot struck him, breaking his shoulder-blade. The wretch jumped to his feet, and with a single bound was in the river. It was not long before he appeared, and Red-Ax, grasping a loaded rifle from one of the trappers who stood near him, took a steady aim, and fired. The bullet went through the villain's head, and he was no more.

Truly, Salvarez' death, like the life he had lived, was a terrible one!

CHAPTER XVI.

THE DEATH OF RED-AX.

It was evening, a few days after the scene narrated in the preceding chapter.

The orb of night, as if striving to atone for the absence of the sun, was slowly ascending to her meridian in a cloudless, starry sky, wrapping the earth in her silvery light.

It was one of those delightful nights peculiar to this country in the most delightful season of the year—Indian summer.

Standing on the bank of the Minnesota, enjoying the scene as only lovers can, were Maud Rockville and Henry Montbleu. It was the first time the two had met since her return from her perilous captivity, for her father's fearful and untimely death had been the cause of untold grief. But one thing sustained her—the deep, holy love she felt for him at her side.

For a while had they stood thus, when the ears of both were startled by the dip of a paddle.

Looking in the direction whence the sound came their eyes fell upon a canoe, and which contained but one individual. Both knew him on the instant. It was their friend, Red-Ax.

He was paddling rapidly, for it was evident, by his mien, that he was in a hurry; and, moreover, his glance was frequently thrown up the river, as if expecting some unwelcome object would suddenly make its appearance.

Landing near where the lovers stood, he saluted them with his accustomed smile, and immediately proceeded to the fort. The two watched him until he had disappeared, in the meanwhile wondering what had brought him thither; but a short time after their thoughts turned toward themselves again, and then the chief was forgotten.

Twenty minutes or more must have elapsed, when the two were startled as they had been before—by the dip of a

paddle. Both gazed in the direction whence it came, and again did their eyes fall upon a canoe.

It was a craft of huge dimensions, and occupied by a dozen stalwart savages.

At the request of his affrighted companion, the two retraced their footsteps toward the fort. Arrived there, Montbleu saw that the advent of the savages had been expected, and preparations were in progress for their reception. The news had been brought by Red-Ax; and, therefore, to this noble savage was due the credit of overthrowing a plot to destroy the settlement, which, without his timely warning, would have certainly proved successful.

Leaving Maud at the door of one of the apartments assigned for the used of the females, he entered one of the rooms on the ground floor, an extremely large one, with spacious folding-doors.

In this apartment were three men—two being inhabitants of the settlement, the other, Elk-horn Bill.

At the invitation of the latter, young Montbleu took his seat at the side of the trapper, and patiently awaited what was about to happen.

He had not long to wait.

Soft footsteps sounded along the hall. The door of the apartment opened, and a dozen Ojibwahs entered. The foremost, a tall, brawny savage, and who appeared to act in the capacity of a chief, advanced toward one of the settlers, and made him a sort of salutation. It was returned, though coldly.

At a signal from their leader, the savages seated themselves in a semicircle on the floor, their oblique orbs busily engaged the while in taking in everything the apartment contained. It was expected by the whites that the savages would draw forth their calumets, and smoke—the usual prelude to an Indian "talk." But in this, they soon discovered that they were mistaken. It was evident that the savages were in a hurry, as their uneasy air plainly evinced. Acting under instructions from Red-Ax, Elk-horn Bill presently demanded the reason of their visit. This question was answered—if answer it may be called—by the chief of the party

"Pale-faces Scarcely a moon ago, the hatchet was dug up by the Ojibwahs, and they have cause to weep. The Great Spirit has been angry with his children, and many of them have fallen by the white man's bullets. Waumega, the prophet, had a dream, and the Great Spirit says we must again bury the hatchet, lest the ground again be red with the blood of our warriors. I have spoken."

Scarcely had the last word left the Ojibwah's mouth, when Elk-horn Bill rose to his feet.

"The tongue," he said, "of the Ojibwah chief is like the serpent's, and at heart he is a liar!"

These words produced the same effect upon those for whom they were intended as would have done a sudden clap of thunder. Involuntarily, several placed their hands beneath their blankets, while their eyes flashed fire.

"You hear me," continued the trapper, who wished to bring on the crisis as soon as possible. "You come hyur pretendin' to sue for peace, while at heart you wish for our scalps. The Ojibwah chief may be cunning, but he has to deal with one who is his equal. Varmints! you air our prisoners!"

The last word had not left the trapper's lips, when the folding-doors were thrown open, and disclosed a view which changed the bearing of the savages to one of awe. They saw before them the towering form of their outlawed chief, Red-Ax, and surrounded by fifty armed men, whose rifles, cocked and ready, were pointed at their breasts. Quick glances were exchanged, and low murmurs of surprise and consternation were all that broke the silence.

It was indeed a thrilling moment.

"Dog!" exclaimed the savage chief at last, addressing Red-Ax. "It is you that has betrayed us."

"Skunk of an Ojibwah, it is!" replied Red-Ax. "And when I see you dangling from a tree, I shall be satisfied."

"Never!"

As one man rose the savages, their dreadful war-cry pealing from every lip. At the same instant, a score of rifles cracked, and nine out of the dozen fell dead in their tracks. The four remaining were quickly secured, among them their chief.

After they were strongly bound, hand and foot, and a strong guard placed over them, the men rushed from the room. In the passage-way was assembled another body, keeping guard over the trap-door which led to the subterranean passage.

By some unexplainable means, the savages had discovered the outlet of this passage, and it was filled with warriors, who waited for their companions in the fort to open the door, when they would immediately rush forth. But for the timely warning of Red-Ax, the plan would undoubtedly have proved successful, and the inhabitants been butchered to a man.

Leaving the fort well guarded, two score men started off for the other *debouchure* of the passage. Arrived there, they perceived that the stone which had served to conceal it had been displaced, and a glance at the ground showed the trappers that their foes were within the passage.

"Now then, how air we to git the varmints out?" asked one of the men.

"Stink 'em out," replied Elk-horn Bill.

A quantity of leaves were quickly gathered, and kindled into a blaze. One of the men searched for a certain plant, well known to trappers, but as it was night, it was some little time before he discovered it. But at length he was successful, and the nauseous weed was thrown upon the weeds, emitting an almost unbearable fetor, even to those who were in the open air. The smoke filled the passage, and impelled by the current of air, rushed through it, even reaching those on guard in the fort.

"Wagh! It begins to tell," said one of the hunters, as the cries and exclamations of the savages reached their ears.

Scarcely had he spoken, when one of the Indians, half-blinded, half suffocated by the smoke, rushed forth. A bullet instantly stretched him out forever.

Again and again was this repeated, until every savage that had entered that fatal passage had paid the penalty with his life. Thus suddenly ended the last attempt of the red man to destroy the settlement of St. John.

Standing in close proximity to an immense oak, from whose

giant arms hung four stout lassoes, were a number of hunters, trappers and traders, as well as the four savages captured the previous evening.

It was the hour of sunrise.

Among the spectators, too, was the chief, Red-Ax.

At a command from Elk-horn Bill, the captives were placed beneath the tree, and the order given to adjust the nooses round their necks.

One of the savages, at this moment, suddenly withdrew his hand from the thongs that had bound his wrists together, and made a bound forward. Standing near him was a hunter, whose long bowie was stuck loosely in his belt. An instant sufficed for the savage to grasp this, and before any one could interfere with his motions, so rapidly were they executed, he was at the side of Red-Ax. The savage waited not an instant, but plunged the keen blade into the noble chief's neck, completely severing the carotid artery. The party now recovered themselves, and the savage was again secured.

But it was too late. Their red friend was dying.

They laid him gently on the greensward, and friendly hands silently and sorrowfully clasped his. Over his eyes gathered a film, and all knew that death would soon bear their friend away.

"Pale-faces," he said, in a weak voice, "Zach-o-kana, the Red-Ax, will soon be no more. He hears the voice of the Great Spirit calling for him to come to the happy hunting-grounds. It sounds like the moaning of the midnight wind through the dark, gloomy forest."

Here he paused; and one of the bystanders poured down his throat a small quantity of water. It seemed to instantly revive him somewhat, and he continued:

"Pale-faces, not far from here is a tall cliff"—here he raised his arm and pointed up the river. "At the foot of the cliff is a grave. It is Waunona's. Bury—me—there. Farewell!"

As the last word died on his lips, the brave, the noble Red-Ax was no more.

Years have elapsed.

St. John is still the village it was, but somewhat larger.

Some distance up the river stands a finely-finished frame cottage, the joint property of Henry Montbleu and his wife—formerly Maud Rockville.

Merry children are playing round the beautiful garden, from which a magnificent panorama of the Minnesota unrolls itself to view.

Since his arrival in St. John and its surroundings, Henry Montbleu had never quitted it, except once, when, soon after his marriage, he made a short trip to St. Paul.

Occasionally, their ever-lively home is made even more so by the visits of their old and valued friend, Elk-horn Bill. This well-known trapper now plies his trade among the streams of the far-famed but little-known Red River of the North, hundreds of miles above the village of St. John.

At the bottom of the garden, close to the river's bank, lies a grave. It is the grave of Waunona and Red-Ax. Deep in the ground they laid him, where the plowshare would not reach him, and where, in summer, the forest-trees waved green above his head.

And often, of a summer evening, while seated on Henry's knee, he relates to his wondering children the events connected with the early history of the settlement near which they live.

But one person more than all the rest do they love to hear about, and that was he who once saved their mother's life, when borne from friends by the ruthless savage. Not a word falls from their father's lips when he speaks of *him* that the children do not treasure up. Not a word does he utter, oft with tears in his eyes, that says he has forgotten the good deeds of the poor, ill-fated, noble Red-Ax.

THE END.

DIME AMERICAN SPEAKER, No. 1.

Young America,
Birthday of Washington
Plea for the Maine law,
Not on the battlefield,
The Italian struggle,
Independence,
Our country,
The equality of man,
Character of the Revo'n
The fruits of the war,
The sewing-machine,
True manhood,
The mystery of life,
The ups and downs,
The truly great,
Early retiring and ris'g,
A. Ward's oration,
True nationality,
Our natal day,
Solferino,
Intelligence the basis of
The war, [liberty,
Charge of light brigade,
After the battle,
The glass railroad,
Case of Mr. Macbeth,
Prof. on phrenology,
Annabel Lee,
Washington's name,
The sailor boy's syren,
J. Jeboom's oration,
A Dutch cure,
The weather,
The heated term,
Philosophy applied,
An old ballad,
Penny wise, pound fool-
True cleanliness, [ish,
Sat'd'y night's enjoy'ts,
"In a just cause,"
No peace with oppression,
A tale of a mouse,
A thanksgiving sermon,
The cost of riches,
Great lives imperishable
The prophecy for the y't
Unfinished problems,
Honor to the dead,
Immortality of patriots
Webster's politi'l system
A vision in the forum,
The press,
Woman's rights,
light of the Governed
My ladder,
Woman,
Alone,
The rebellion of 1861,
Disunion.

DIME NATIONAL SPEAKER, No. 2.

Union and its results,
Our country's future,
The statesman's labors,
True immortality,
Let the childless weep,
Our country's glory,
Union a household,
Independence bell,
The scholar's dignity,
The cycles of progress,
A Christmas chant,
Stability of Christianity
The true higher law,
The one great need,
The ship and the bird,
Tecumseh's speech,
Territorial expansion,
Martha Hopkins,
The bashful man's story
The matter-of-fact man,
Rich and poor,
Seeing the eclipse,
Beauties of the law,
Ge-lang! git up,
The rats of life,
Crowning glory of U.S.
Three fools,
Washington,
Our great inheritance,
Eulogy on Henry Clay,
Ohio,
Oliver Hazard Perry,
Our domain,
Systems of belief,
The Indian chief,
The independent farmer,
Mrs. Grammar's ball,
How the money comes,
Future of the fashions,
Loyalty to liberty,
Our country first, last,
and always,
British influence,
Defense of Jefferson,
National hatreds,
Murder will out,
Strive for the best,
Early rising,
Deeds of kindness,
Gates of sleep,
The bugle,
A Hoodish gem,
Purity of the struggle
Old age,
Beautiful and true,
The worm of the still,
Man and the Infinite,
Language of the Eagle
Washington.
The Deluge.

DIME PATRIOTIC SPEAKER, No. 3.

America to the world,
Love of country,
Right of self-preserva-
Our cause, [tion,
A Kentuckian's appeal,
Kentucky steadfast,
Timidity is treason,
The alarum,
April 15th, 1861,
The spirit of '61,
The precious heritage,
The Irish element,
Train's speech,
Christy's Speech,
Let me alone,
Brigand-ier-General,
The draft,
Union Square speeches,
The Union,
Our country's call,
The story of an oak tree,
Le-g on my leg,
History of our flag,
T. F. Meagher's address,
We owe to the Union,
Last speech of Stephen
A. Douglas,
Lincoln's message,
Great Bell Roland,
The New Year and the
King Cotton, [Union,
Battle anthem,
The ends of peace,
Freedom the watchword
Crisis of our nation,
Duty of Christian patriots,
Turkey Dan's oration,
A fearless plea,
The onus of slavery,
A foreigner's tribute,
The little Zouave,
Catholic cathedral,
The "Speculators."

DIME COMIC SPEAKER, No. 4.

Klebcyergom on the war
Age bluntly considered,
Early rising,
The wasp and the bee,
Comic Grammar, No. 1,
I'm not a single man,
A. Ward's advice,
Bunfus on Pickwick,
Romeo and Juliet,
Happiness,
Dogs,
Pop,
A Texan Eulogium,
How to be a fireman,
The United States,
Puff's acc't of himself,
Practical phrenology,
Beautiful,
Cabbage,
Disagreeable people,
What is a bachelor like?
Funny folks,
A song of woe,
Ward's trip to Richm'd,
Parody,
The mountebank,
Compound interest,
A sermon on the text,
Old dog Jock,
The fishes' toilet,
Brian O'Linn,
Crockett to office-seekers
Who is my opponent?
Political stump speech,
Comic Grammar, No. 2,
Farewell to the bottle,
The cork leg,
The smack in school,
Slick's definition of wife,
Tale of a hat,
The debating club,
A Dutch sermon,
Lecture on locomotion,
Mrs. Candle on number'ls

DIME ELOCUTIONIST, No. 5.

SEC. I. Principles of True Enunciation.—Faults in enunciation; how to avoid them. Special rules and observances.

SEC. II. The Art of Oratory—Sheridan's List of the Passions: Tranquility, Cheerfulness, Mirth, Raillery, Buffoonery, Joy, Delight, Gravity, Inquiry, Attention, Modesty, Perplexity, Pity, Grief, Melancholy, Despair, Fear, Shame, Remorse, Courage, Boasting, Pride, Obstinacy, Authority, Commanding, Forbidding, Affirming, Denying, Difference, Agreeing, Exhorting, Judging, Approving, Acquitting, Condemning, Teaching, Pardoning, Arguing, Dismissing, Refusing, Granting, Dependance, Veneration, Hope, Desire, Love, Respect, Giving, Wonder, Admiration, Gratitude, Curiosity, Persuasion, Tempting, Promising, Affirmation, Sloth, Interjection, Anger, etc.

SEC. III. The Component Elements of an Oration.—Rules of Composition as applied to Words and Phrases, viz.: Purity, Propriety, Precision. As applied to Sentences, viz.: Length of Sentence, Clearness, Unity, Strength, Figures of Speech; the Exodium, the Narration, the Proposition, the Confirmation, the Refutation, the Peroration.

SEC. IV. Representative Exercises in Prose and Verse.—Transition; A Plea for the Ox; Falstaff's Soliloquy on Honor; the Burial of Lincoln; the Call and Response; the Bayonet Charge; History of a Life; the Bugle; the Bells; Byron; Macbeth and the Dagger; Hamlet's Soliloquy; Old Things; Look Upward; King William Rufus; the Eve of Waterloo; Music; Discoveries of Galileo, etc.

SEC. V. Observations on Good Articulation.

DIME LUDICROUS SPEAKER, No. 14.

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Higher,
The closing year,
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The hen scratches,
Ass and the violinist,
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My first knife,
Dar Loddery Dicket,
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Tobacco boys,
Big geniuses,
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Biting one's nose off,
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Fourth of July oration,
Cheer up,
Self-esteem,
Buckwheat cakes,
Twain's little boy,
A word with you,
A chemical lament,
The candy-pulling,
Contentment,
On courting,
On laughing,
The tanner boy,
On wimmen's rights,
The healer,
The criminal lawyer,
Ballad of Matilda Jane
Water,
The ballad of a baker
Good for something,
A moving sermon.

KARL PRETZEL'S KOMIKAL SPEAKER, No. 15.

Schandal,
Don'd been afraid,
Gamboling,
Indemberance,
Gretchen und me go oud
Hope. Das ish vat it ish,
"Dot musquiter,"
Leedle gal-child'adream
Dhere vas no crying,
Leedle speedches,
Pells, pells,
The puzzled Dutchman,
Address to a school,
His sphere,
Translations from Esop.
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Simon Short's son Sam,
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